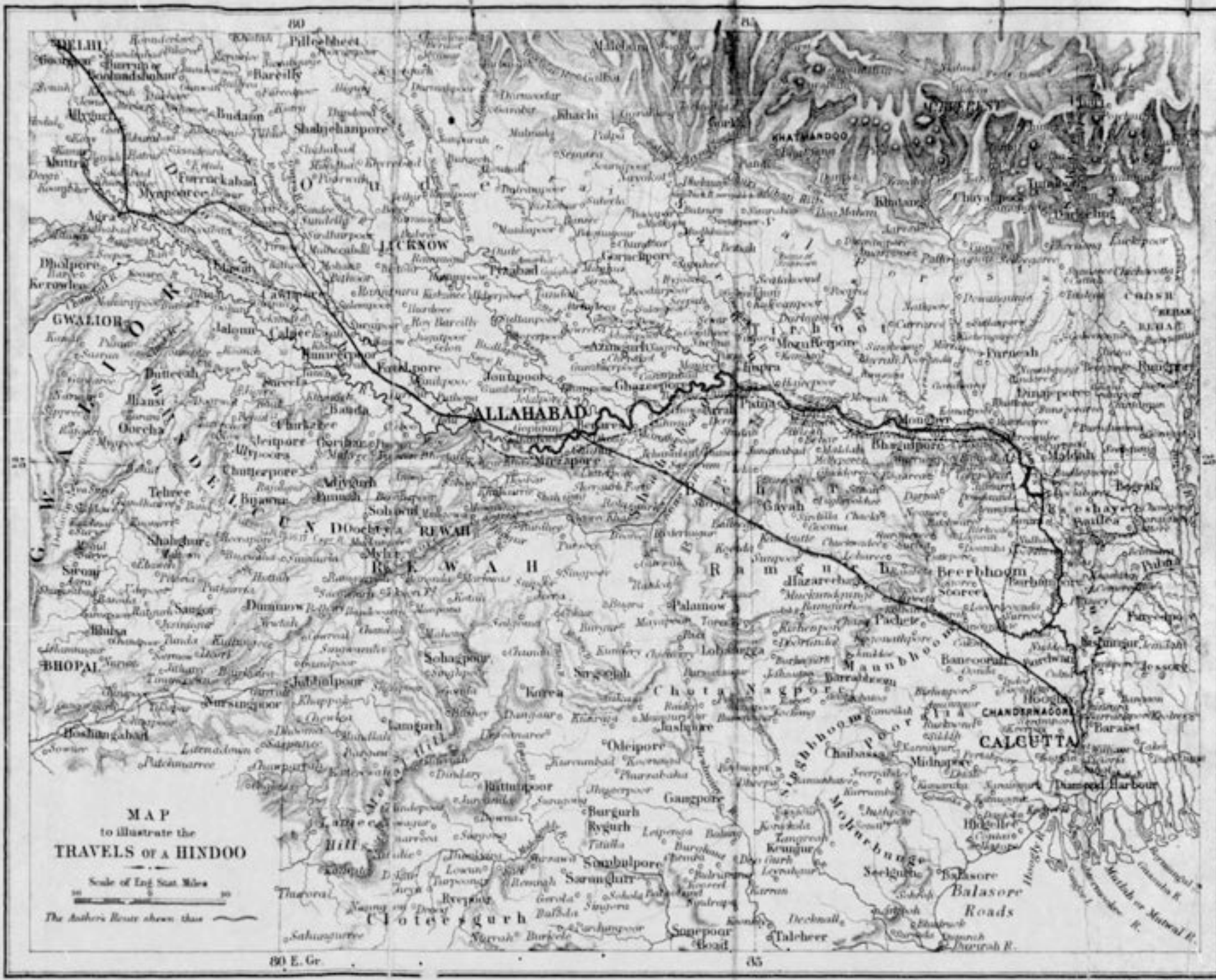
THE

TRAVELS OF A HINDOO.

VOL. I.

Digitized with financial assistance from
NSDL
Technology, Trust & Reach
on 07 January, 2017


MAP
to illustrate the
TRAVELS OF A HINDOO
Scale of Eng. Stat. Miles
The Author's Route shown thus
DELHI
Agra
LUCKNOW
ALLAHABAD
Benares
Patna
Gayah
Bhagulpore
Moorshedabad
Beerbhoom
Maldah
Rajmahal
Dinajpore
Purneah
Boglipore
Jessore
Burdwan
Hooghly
CHANDERNAGORE
CALCUTTA
Diamond Harbour
Midnapore
Balasore
Balasore Roads
Cuttack
Sumbulpore
Sirguja
Rewah
Jubbulpoor
Nursingpoor
Hoshungabad
BHOPAL
Saugor
Gwalior
Agimeer
Jeypore
Bhurtpore
Mynpoorie
Furruckabad
Shahjehanpore
Budaon
Bareilly
Pilleebheet
Rohilcund
Allahabad
Doab
Bundelcund
Malwah
Gondwana
Orissa
Chota Nagpore
Singbhoom
Maunbhoom
Midnapoor
Hurrisseram
Mahanuddy R.
Mutlah or Mutwal R.
Hooghly R.
Ganges R.
Jumna R.
Nerbudda R.
Soane R.
Tipboot
Nepaul
KHATMANDOO
Gorkha
Bhotan
Chaibassa
Ramgur
Palamow
Lohardugga
Sohagpoor
Kurwa
Odeipore
Gangpore
Burgurh
Rygurh
Saranguh
Raigurh
Chuteesgurh
Sonepoor
Talcheer
Kerowlee
Dholpore
Jalown
Calpee
Kunneegunge
Futtehpore
Jounpoor
Azimgurh
Ghazeepore
Mogul Serai
Mirzapore
Chunar
Banda
Humeerpore
Oorcha
Chatterpore
Myhere
Tehree
Bijawur
Sohagpore
Doochey
Shahgunge
Sirowj
Dumnow
Bilsa
Kotah
Chumbul R.
Betwa R.
Sone R.
Kane R.
Subunreka R.
Damooda R.
Rupnarain R.
Hoogly R.
Kasai R.
Barabulung R.
Soorey
Pachete
Bancoorah
Burrabazar
Hazareebaug
Kharagpore
Jaleshare
Kurrumbad
Pharrabahat
Kurrumbad
Kesingha
Kurrumbad
Kurrumbad
Kurrumbad

THE

TRAVELS OF A HINDOO

TO VARIOUS PARTS OF

BENGAL AND UPPER INDIA.

BY

BHOLANAUTH CHUNDER,

MEMBER OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

J. TALBOYS WHEELER, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF A 'HISTORY OF INDIA.'

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. I.

LONDON:

N. TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1869.

[*All rights reserved.*]

JOHN CHILDS AND SON, PRINTERS.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

SIR JOHN LAIRD MAIR LAWRENCE, BARONET,

G.C.B., G.C.S.I.,

VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA,

ETC., ETC.

SIR,

YOUR EXCELLENCY has been pleased to permit me to present the 'Travels of a Hindoo' to the public under the auspices of your Excellency's name.

I have endeavoured in this work to give the impressions produced by a journey from Calcutta, as far as Delhi, upon the mind of one who is indebted for his education to the paternal government of the British in India; and to whom can I with more propriety inscribe the humble fruits of that education than to the illustrious statesman who presides at the head of that government, and from whose eminent talents and wisdom the country has reaped many signal benefits? That the ascendancy of British rule may long subsist in India to improve the condition of its population, and that your Excellency may long continue to exercise an influence over their welfare and happiness, is the earnest prayer of,

Sir,

Your Excellency's

Most obedient and most humble servant,

BHOLANAUTH CHUNDER.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

A TRIP UP THE HOOGHLY.

CHAPTER I.

Preliminary remarks.—The date of the earliest trip.—Chitpore.—Legend of Chitraswari.—Cossipore.—Burranagur.—Duckinasore.—Balli.—Penhatty.—*Sumaj* of Raghub Pundit.—Khurdah.—The Gossains.—Mahesh.—Serampore.—Barrackpore.—The Hindoo Lady of Job Charnock.—Ghiretty.—Chandernagore.—The French Revolution there.—Chinsurah.—Hooghly.—The annihilation of the Portuguese power in Bengal.—Satgaon.—Triveni.—Doomurdah.—The robber-chief Issur Baboo.—Sooksagur.—Chagdah.—Goopteeparah.—Santipoor.—Kulna.—Nuddea.—Traditions of its origin.—Its celebrity as a place of learning.—History of Choitunya.—Present state of the Brahmins of Nuddea.—A Gymnosophist.—Jahn-nugger.—Brahmaditala.—Snake-charmers and snake-players.—Krishnugger.—Anecdote of convict labour.—Rajah Krishna Chunder Roy.—The poet Bharut Chunder.—Agradweep.—Cutwa.—Choitunya's adoption of *Dundeeism*.—Clive and the guardian angel of Britain.—Plassey.—The river Adjai.—Bisramtullah.—Soopoor.—Rajah Surath.—The vagabond Sunnyassi.—Kenduli, the birth-place of Joydeva.—Doobrajpoor.—Hot wells of Bukkesur.—Soory.—The old woman of eighty-six.—Cynthia.—Jammo-Kundee—Festival of Ras-jatra.—Berhampore.—The Irish Raja of Hurrianah.—Kasimbazar.—Moorshedabad, as it was and as it is.—The new palace of the Nabob Nazim.—His Zenana.—Jungipore.—Sooty.—The ruins of Gour . . . . *page* 1

CHAPTER II.

Rajmahal.—The Mootee-Jhurna waterfall.—Secreegully—The Terriagurry Pass.—Peer-Pointee.—Colgong.—Bhagulpore.—Cleveland's monuments.—Mount Mandar.—The rock of Jangeerah.—Sultangung.—The ancient Buddhist Vihara, or mon-

astery.—Jumalpore tunnel.—Hot springs of Seetakoond.—Monghyr.—Ancient Palibothra and modern Patna.—Bankipore.—The sacred Peepul tree of Buddha.—Herihar-Chetra Mela and Sonepore Races.—Dinapore.—The Soane Bridge.—Arrah.—Chuprah.—Ghazipore.—Lord Cornwallis's tomb.—Chunar.—Trimbukjee Danglia, the ex-minister of Baja Row.—The Almighty's seat at Chunar.—Mirzapore.—The temple of Bindachul 95

A TOUR TO THE NORTH-WEST.

CHAPTER III.

Introductory remarks.—Railway in India.—Pundooa tower.—Battle of the Cow.—The ghost of a bovine Bhuggobuttee.—The iron rod, or Shah Sufi's walking-stick.—Peer-pukur and Fatikhan, or the tame alligator.—Boinchi.—The robber in India.—The Amazon Kali.—Mamaree.—Burdwan.—The tale of Biddya and Soondra.—Biddyapotta, or the abode of Biddya.—The Maun-surrobur, or Raja Maun's tank.—The *Mushan*, or the place of Soondra's execution.—The Nabobhaut.—Shere Afkun's tomb.—The old Rajbaree.—The Maharajah of Burdwan.—Kristoshair and female swimmers.—The Dilkhoosa-baug.—The menagerie and its lions.—The future of Hindoo shrines and temples 139

CHAPTER IV.

Mankur.—Paneeghur.—Legend of Byjnath.—Hindoo opinion of coals.—The petrified forest at Singarim.—Raneegunge.—Hindoo and Anglo-Saxon characteristics.—The future of Raneegunge.—Its collieries.—The Damooder.—The Grand Trunk Road.—Dawk travelling.—The Barakur river.—The Barakur serai.—Young Bengal's picture of the prospective of India.—The Santhals, an aboriginal race.—Their homes and habits.—Santhal females.—Santhal polity and religion.—The hill-tribes of India.—Taldangah bungalow . 161

CHAPTER V.

Mount Parisnath.—Topechanchee.—The Hindoostanee proverb about Bengal.—Jain temple at Parisnath.—Doomree.—The desolation of the hill-regions.—The man carried by a tiger.

—A gentleman's encounter with a bear.—The break-down of a dawk-gharry.—Burhee.—Dunwah Pass.—Barrak-serai. —The sick child.—Legend of the Fulgoo river.—Shergotty. —The *Vishnupud* at Gaya.—Perpetual widowership of the Gayalese.—Antiquities of Oomga.—The legend of the Nerbudda and Soane.—Deyree.—Rotasgurh.—Koer Sing and Ummer Sing.—The Gossain-talao.—Sasseram.—Haseyn Khan's tomb.—The tomb of Shere Shah.—Legend of the Caramnassa river.—Rajah Trisanku and Young Bengal 202

CHAPTER VI.

Benares.—Its situation upon the Trident of Shiva and exemption from earthquakes.—Legend of Vyas-Kasi interpreted. —Hindoo characteristics of Benares.—The great antiquity, and description of that city in a Tamul drama.—The many changes in its site, and the origin of its present name.—Its modern features.—The fort of Benares.—The Rajghaut.—Khottah architecture.—The idols and temples.—Various sectarian influences at various times.—Bheloopoor, the birth-place of Parisnath.—The Ranee Dowager of Vizianagram.—Ghaut-scenes at Benares.—Teelabhandessur, and his history.—The legend of Munikurnika-ghaut.—The observatory.—Madoo-rai-ke-dharara, or the mosque of Aurungzebe.—Ramnugger.—The temple of Biseswara.—The Gyan-Bapi.—The temple of Unna Poorna.—Sunnyassees and Bhoyrubbees.—Sameness of sight-seeing in Benares.—The Chouk.—The Benares college. —Comparison of Sanscrit and English.—Summing up of the account of Benares.—Secrole.—Church Mission School.—Warren Hastings at Benares in 1781, and the Englishman there in 1860.—A Mofussil magistrate and a Calcutta attorney.—The English burial-ground at Secrole.—The mutiny at Benares.—The Bengalee-tola, or the quarter of the Bengalees.—Sarnath.—The Buddhist temple of Dhamek.—Choukandi, or Luri-ka-kodan.—Description of Benares in the Kasi-khund.—Destruction of Sarnath 236

CHAPTER VII.

Allahabad.—The Ganges and Jumna.—Shaving operation at their confluence.—The Allahabad mela.—Antiquity of the city.—Ancient Hindoo *Republic* at Allahabad.—Legend of the Seraswattee river.—The Allahabad fort.—The transmi-

gration of Akber from a Hindoo Brahmin to a Mahomedan emperor.—Importance of Allahabad during the mutiny.—Patalpooree, or the subterranean temple.—Bheema's Gada or Lat.—Jehangeer and his Marwaree Begum.—Martial law at Allahabad.—Stories of the mutiny.—Hindoostanee peasant-women.—The Duria-ghaut.—Bhradwaj Muni's hermitage.—The Chusero Bagh.—The rebel Moulivie and his well.—Battle of the Shoes.—The future of Allahabad.—The valley of the Doab.—Berhampore.—Futtehpore.—Cawnpore, past and present.—Shah Behari Lal's ghaut.—Nana and his council.—Miss Wheeler.—The House of Massacre.—Intrenchments of General Wheeler.—Suttee-Chowra-ghaut.—Ancient Khetryas and modern Sepoys.—The Ganges canal.—The visionary attorney.—Idolatry in Hindoostan and Bengal.—Chowbeypore.—Mera-ka-serai.—Kanouge.—Buddha's tooth there in former times.—The ancient Hindoo citadel.—The Rang-Mahal.—Hindoo and Mahomedan accounts of Kanouge criticized.—The Grand Trunk Road in the Doab.—The drought of 1860.—The famine of 1861.—Mutiny-ruins along the road.—A mango tope.—Mynporee.—Shecoabad.—The Hindoostanee and Bengalee compared.—Former insecurity and present security of travelling in the Doab.—European fugitives during the mutiny.—Ferozabad.—Field of the wreck of Hindoo independence.—Approach to Agra . . 301

CHAPTER VIII.

First view of Agra.—A Jumna sandbank.—Feizi.—The Goolfushun and Charbagh of Baber.—The Etmad-ud-Dowla.—Fort of Agra.—Darsan Darwaza, or Gate of Sights.—The Lallah host.—Young Hindoostan's parlour.—Excursion to the fort.—Umra Sing Ka fatuck.—Dewani-khas.—Sheesha Mahl, or Hall of Mirrors.—Akber's harem.—Mogul *fancy fairs*.—The Phanseghur.—Dewanni-aum.—Mootee Musjeed.—Shah Jehan's bath.—Jehangeer's drinking-cup.—Great gun of Agra.—The Taj.—Its story.—Its architect.—Commemorative poems.—The public works of the Hindoos, the Mahomedans, and the English in India.—Taj gardens.—Antiquity of Agra.—Description of, by Jehangeer.—The Agra of 1860.—Its Chowk.—Varieties of its population.—Peculiarities of the Hindoostanees.—The Agra college.—Memorials of British rule at Agra.—Hindoostanee opinion of the Income Tax 382

INTRODUCTION.

THE 'Travels of a Hindoo,' by Baboo Bholanauth Chunder, which are now for the first time published in Europe, will be found on perusal to be among the most remarkable, and certainly among the most original, works which have hitherto appeared in connection with India. These Travels originally appeared from week to week in a Calcutta periodical entitled the 'Saturday Evening Englishman,' and in that shape they soon attracted public attention. That the author was a Hindoo seemed scarcely open to question. His thoughts and expressions respecting family and social life were evidently moulded by a Hindoo training; whilst his observations and opinions, especially as regards places of pilgrimage and other matters connected with religion, were eminently Hindoo. At the same time, however, his thorough mastery of the English language, and his wonderful familiarity with English ideas and turns of thought, which could only have been obtained by an extensive course of English reading, appear to have led some to suspect that after all the real knight-errant might prove to be a European in the disguise of a Hindoo.

The present writer has been requested by Baboo Bholanauth Chunder to introduce his Travels to the English public; and accordingly considers it desirable in the first place to assure the reader that the Baboo is a veritable

Hindoo, and the author of the entire work. The writer of this introduction has not added or altered a single line or word; and is given to understand that the Baboo has derived no literary assistance whatever from any one, whether Native or European. The Baboo has given his solemn assurance that he is the sole author of the narrative of his travels, and there is no reason whatever for doubting his words. Indeed, he has displayed in personal intercourse an amount of observation and thoughtfulness fully equal to that which characterizes the story of his sojournings. The value of the accompanying volumes is thus abundantly manifest. The Travels of the Baboo in India are not the sketchy production of a European traveller, but the genuine *bonâ fide* work of a Hindoo wanderer, who has made his way from Calcutta to the Upper Provinces, and looked upon every scene with Hindoo eyes, and indulged in trains of thought and association which only find expression in Native society, and are wholly foreign to European ideas. European readers must be generally aware of the limited character and scope of the information which is to be obtained from the ordinary run of European travellers in India; the descriptions, often very graphic, of external life; the appreciation of the picturesque in external nature; the perception of the ludicrous in Native habits, manners, and sentiments; and a moral shrug of the shoulders at all that is strange, unintelligible, or idolatrous:—all, however, combined with an utter want of real sympathy with the people, or close and familiar acquaintance with their thoughts and ways. Now, however, with the assistance of these 'Travels,' Englishmen will be enabled, for the first time in English literature, to take a survey of India with the eyes of a Hindoo; to go on pilgrimages to holy places in the company of a guide who is neither superstitious nor profane, but a fair type of the enlightened class of English-educated Bengalee gentlemen.

Our traveller perhaps does not tell us all he knows. Probably, like the candid old father of history, he has been fearful of meddling too much with divine things, lest h should thereby incur the anger of the gods. But so far as he delineates pictures of Indian life and manners, and familiarizes his readers with the peculiar tone of Hindoo thought and sentiment, his Travels are far superior to those of any writer with which we have hitherto become acquainted. Even the observant old travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, who went peeping and prying everywhere, mingling freely with Natives, and living like Natives, never furnished a tithe of the stock of local traditions, gossiping stories, and exhaustive descriptions which are here presented to English and Indian readers.

Here it may be advisable to furnish a brief sketch of the author, and to describe the circumstances under which his travels were undertaken. In so doing free use will be made of such personal particulars as he himself thought proper to supply, in addition to such details as could be obtained from more general sources of information. Indeed, upon these points it will be advisable under the circumstances to enlarge more considerably than would otherwise be necessary; for unless the reader is familiarized with the particular religious ideas of the traveller, he will fail to take that interest in the Travels which they are well calculated to excite.

Baboo Bholanauth Chunder is at present a man of about forty years of age. He is by birth a Bengalee, and an inhabitant of Calcutta. He belongs to the class of Bunniahs, a caste of Hindoo traders, who hold the same rank as that of the ancient VAISYAS, or merchants, in the caste system of Maun, which comprises BRAHMANS, or priests; KSHATRIYAS, or soldiers; VAISYAS, or merchants, and SUDRAS, or servile cultivators. A history of the Bunniahs of Bengal would present many points of interest,

even to European readers, and would prove an important addition to the history of the civilization of the human race. In the tenth century of the Christian era an attempt is said to have been made by the famous Raja of Bullala, in the ancient Bengal metropolis at Gour, to degrade the class of Bunniahs, probably from differences of religious opinion and sectarian feelings, of which, however, nothing whatever is known beyond the bare tradition of the fact. It is curious also to note that the Bunniahs have ceased to wear the sacrificial thread, that ancient and significant emblem which is worn in three strings, and which separates the three twice-born castes of Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas from the caste of Súdras. The result has been that whilst the Bunniahs of Bengal have evidently sprung from the same common origin as the Bunniahs of Hindoostan and Guzerat, there is no relationship or social intercourse existing between the two. Geographical separation, and differences of habits, local usages, and religious opinions, have perhaps tended in a great measure to render them aliens towards each other; and indeed there is as little sympathy and recognition of consanguinity between the Bunniahs of Bengal and those of Hindoostan, as there is between the Brahmans of the two countries. But the great mark of distinction is the sacrificial thread, which is still worn by the Bunniahs of Upper and Western India, but has been denied to the Bunniahs of Bengal; and there can be no doubt that in by-gone generations some heart-burning was felt in Bengal on account of this thread. Very recently a Bunniah millionnaire of Calcutta attempted to revive the practice of wearing it; but in this age of religious indifference and apathy, the movement met with little response. During the present generation the sacrificial threads of the old Hindoo legislator have fallen very considerably in the public esteem, and they are thrown

off altogether by that sect of monotheistic reformers who are known as the members of the Brahmo Somaj.

Notwithstanding, however, the attempt of the Raja of Bullala to lower the Bunniahs in national esteem, their opulence and enterprise have always maintained the respectability and dignity of the class; and a mercantile aristocracy has arisen among them, which has held the purse-strings of the nation, and of whom the rich family of the Mullicks of the present day are a favourable example. Many of the Bunniahs may be traced as having gradually migrated in by-gone generations from Gour through Moorshedabad, Beerbhoom, and Burdwan, and finally settled at Satgong, in the district of Hooghly. It is this latter class of adventurous Bunniahs who chiefly carried on mercantile transactions in the sixteenth century with the Portuguese of Hooghly; and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the Dutch of Chinsurah, the French of Chandernagore, and the English of Calcutta. From this circumstance it is said that the Bunniahs first imbibed a tincture of European refinement and delicacy towards females, which until late years was little appreciated by the rest of their countrymen.

Our traveller, Baboo Bholanauth Chunder, was naturally bred in the hereditary creed of his parents, who were Vaishnavas, or worshippers of Vishnu. This deity is generally worshipped through the medium of incarnations, of whom Rama and Krishna are the most famous; but Krishna is worshipped by Bunniahs generally as the incarnation of Vishnu. Here it should be remarked that the god Vishnu is to the mind of his Hindoo worshippers the one Supreme Being, who created all things and exists in all things. According to a widely-spread belief, Vishnu became incarnate in succession in the two heroes, Rama and Krishna, for the purpose of delivering the human race from

the oppressions of the Rákshavas, or demons; in other words, to drive out the Buddhist hierarchy, and re-establish the Brahmanical system in India.* From some cause or other the worship of Vishnu declined in Bengal; but it was modified and revived in the fifteenth century by a celebrated religious teacher named Choitunya. This eminent personage succeeded in reforming many religious and social abuses, and founded a sect of all classes without any distinction of caste; and in so doing continued the great work which was commenced by Joydeva about a century previously. The Bunniahs of Bengal chiefly belong to the sect of Choitunya, and acknowledge him as an incarnation of Krishna, without however adopting any of those ascetic habits which distinguish many of the Vaishnavas. The lay followers of Choitunya are merely initiated in the mantra, or invocation to deity, by their religious preceptors, who are called Gossains. These Gossains are descendants of Nityanunda, the coadjutor of Choitunya; and it was to this Nityanunda that Choitunya intrusted the task of spreading his religion, after his retirement from his spiritual labours. Up to the last generation these Gossains were held in great veneration; but in the present day they receive little respect excepting from Hindoo females, who must be regarded as the main preservers of superstitious ideas and usages amongst the more enlightened Hindoo community. The Gossains are otherwise called Gooroos, and as such are hereditary preceptors in a family. In the case of Bholanauth Chunder, the family of the old family Gooroo became altogether extinct, and no other Gooroo was selected, so that to this day the Baboo is without initiation. The Gossains

* For the proof of the above statements, the writer may be permitted to refer to his History of India *passim*. Vishnu has, in fact, appeared in nine incarnations, and there is a tenth yet to come; but the two specified in the text are the most important.

of Bengal are regarded as of divine origin, but they are not actually worshipped like those of Bombay and Guzerat, who are known as Marajas. The utmost respect that is paid to the Bengalee Gossains by their followers consists in taking and kissing the dust of their feet, but the younger females are not permitted to appear before them, and no scandals have arisen in the community like those which some years back obtained such unhappy notoriety in the Western Presidency. Whilst, however, Baboo Bholanauth Chunder, and the Bunniahs generally, are the sectarian worshippers of Vishnu in his incarnation as Krishna, they are Hindoos in every respect, and consequently as a sect, though not perhaps always as individuals, they believe in all the gods of the Hindoo Pantheon. Indeed, the lay members of the Vaishnava sect adore also Siva and Doorgá, as representatives of deity, quite as much as the lay members of the Saiva and Sakto sects, who worship Siva and Doorgá, pay their adorations to Krishna. Bholanauth Chunder complains, and with some show of reason, that it is common to tax young Bengal with the want of any religion, and with showing no active hatred of that idolatry which his education has taught him to despise and disbelieve. But Bholanauth Chunder asserts that this charge is contradicted by the movement that has been for some time in operation amongst educated natives, in favour of that monotheistic worship of spiritual deity known as Brahmoism, and by the fact that many enlightened Bengalees cherished a strong faith in that Deism which believes in the existence of God, but refuses to believe in any of the trammels or forms which are superstitiously regarded as a part of the religion. This is not the place for theological controversy. The present writer is simply desirous of explaining to European readers the religious ideas which are entertained by that class of Bengalees of whom our traveller is a type. Accordingly it will suffice to state that

Baboo Bholanauth Chunder is one of those Deists who believe in God, but who disbelieve in rites and forms; and who adore the Supreme Being, and simply recognize all the national gods of the Hindoos as the traditional deities of their forefathers. It might also be remarked as a significant fact connected with the social history of the Hindoos, that under the Mussulman rule the public worship of idols was generally suppressed; for wealth and idolatry were alike concealed from the eyes of the tyrannical and grasping Nabobs. Under the tolerant rule of the late Company the natives of Bengal displayed their wealth and brought out their idols without fear; and as they acquired new fortunes, so they added to the number of the idols in their households. In later times however wealth has been more generally diffused, and is obtained by steady industry rather than by lucky speculations, and consequently idolatry is going out of fashion, as it is popularly believed that fortunes are no longer to be obtained by propitiating the gods. Some ten or fifteen years ago at least five thousand images of Doorgá were annually made in Calcutta for the celebration of the Doorgá festival; but in the present year scarcely a thousand have been made in all Calcutta; and it was especially remarked that there was a great falling off in 1866, which was the memorable year of the famine.

Turning, however, to the individual subject before us, it may be remarked that the Baboo is thoroughly in earnest in his desire to extend his own views as regards religion and religious worship amongst his fellow-countrymen. In the present day, whilst superstitious ideas have begun to die out of the land, the number of pilgrims to sacred places and shrines has largely increased; as all the wealthier classes, and especially the females, avail themselves very considerably of the safe and speedy mode of travelling by the Rail, as an easy means for going on pilgrimage to Benares and Brindabun,

for the purpose of washing away their sins in a holy river. Accordingly the Baboo has made it his object in the following pages to interpret the various national legends and local traditions of the places he has visited, in such a way as to disabuse the minds of Native readers of the superstitious ideas which are at present connected with many of the localities. It is true that the narrative of his travels was also mainly intended for those who could read English; but the author contemplates publishing a translation in Bengalee for the special purpose above indicated.

The proficiency of Baboo Bholanauth Chunder in the English language has already been noticed; and it should now be remarked that he is deeply indebted for this proficiency to a distinguished poet and essayist, who was widely known in India twenty and thirty years ago under the initials of D. L. R. The productions of this gentleman were honoured with the praise of Macaulay, and his memory is still cherished by his pupils, although it has almost passed away from the present generation of Anglo-Indians. Captain David Lester Richardson held the post of Principal of the Hindoo College at Calcutta, and taught English literature to the two upper classes. At this institution Bholanauth Chunder received tuition for several years, and at that time it occupied the first place in the field of Native education. Indeed, it was the Hindoo College that first sent out those educated Natives, who became distinguished from their orthodox countrymen by the designation of Young Bengal.

Baboo Bholanauth Chunder was naturally familiar from his early years with several places on the river Hooghly in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, such as Penhatty, Khurdah, and Mahesh, which are remarkable for many religious reminiscences connected with the worship of Vishnu, and at which the most reputed Gossains have taken up their residence. The annual fairs and festivals which are held in

those places are frequented by multitudes of people from Calcutta and its neighbourhood; and during his boyhood our traveller frequently visited those spots, and shared in the mingling of amusement with religious worship which is always to be found on such occasions. At a later period his journeys extended to Serampore and Chinsurah, which in those days could only be reached by boats, but which are now within an easy distance by rail. Here it should be remarked that thirty years ago the strongest possible prejudice against travelling existed in the minds of the Bengalees; and to this day there are many families who have never been able to overcome this aversion. An old Bengalee proverb was universally accepted, that he was the happiest man who never owed a debt nor undertook a journey. It was only the old men and old widows who left their homes to go on pilgrimages to Benares and Brindabun; Benares being the sacred city to the worshippers of Siva, and Brindabun the sacred locality to the worshippers of Vishnu in his incarnation as Krishna. These ancient pilgrims never set out without first making their wills; and their return home was scarcely ever expected by their families. Under such circumstances a young Bengalee was rarely allowed to leave the parental roof; and a little voyage up the river to Chinsurah or Hooghly was often a matter of boast, and the hero of the journey was regarded by his associates as an adventurous traveller. The Baboo, however, had made the history of India his favourite study, and soon became imbued with a strong desire to visit the localities which were famous in the national traditions. Moreover, on leaving school he had chosen the hereditary profession of his caste; and accordingly often found it necessary to visit many parts of Bengal to institute inquiries respecting the country produce in which he traded. The first important trip which he undertook was in

1843 to the once famous town of Dacca, which in the days of our grandmothers manufactured the celebrated muslin dresses, each of which was of so fine a texture that it could be drawn through a wedding-ring. Of course our young traveller was not at that period above the superstitions of his countrymen; and indeed never does a Hindoo take any step of importance without first consulting the stars. This is usually done by reference either to a Brahman astrologer, or to the astrological almanack. When business will not admit of delay, a Hindoo will consult either the Sivagyanmut, or 'advices of Siva,' or the buchuns, or 'sayings,' of Khona, the wife of Varahamira, the great astronomer who was one of the nine gems in the court of Vikramaditya, the great monarch of Malwa, whose era of fifty-seven years before Christ is still in constant use throughout Hindoostan. Before, however, starting on his trip to Dacca, Baboo Bholanauth Chunder had not only to fix upon an auspicious day, but also to perform certain ceremonies which are necessary on such occasions. These ceremonies generally consist in bowing to the elders of the family, males and females, with the head down to the ground, in which attitude their benedictions are received. The intending traveller then carries a leaf of the bale-tree which has been taken out of a brass pot full of Ganges water, and marches out of the house without looking backwards. All these rites being performed, the Baboo started on his first trip, which lasted only a month, and of which the results are comparatively unimportant, and do not appear in the present narrative of travels.

The journeys described in the present volumes were undertaken at intervals between 1845 and 1866, some being for purposes of trade, and others for amusement and information. In the first instance the Baboo relates the story of a trip up the river Hooghly, in which he describes the

principal places on the banks of the river, commencing from Chitpore to Nuddea, and thence from Kishnaghur to Cutwah, and the district of Beerbhoom, where he saw the tomb of Joydeva. Few Europeans probably are familiar with the name of Joydeva; and yet this man, like Choitunya, will hold a prominent place in some future history of India as an enthusiast and a reformer, who has left a lasting impress in Bengal. He too spiritualized the worship of Krishna, and denounced the caste system. One of his most celebrated poems was translated at full length by Sir William Jones, and is buried in one of the earlier volumes of the Journal of the Asiatic Society; and though it abounds with that Oriental imagery and passion which seem to have characterized the most popular Eastern bards from time immemorial, it contains some undoubted beauties, and throws a new light upon some important phases of religious development. From the tomb of this important person our Hindoo traveller proceeded to Moorshedabad, the capital of the former Nawaubs of Bengal, of which he has given a full account; and he has also furnished interesting descriptions, of Gour, Rajmahal, Bhagulpore, Sultangunj, Monghyr, Patna, Ghazeepore, Chunar, and Mirzapore, interlarded with local traditions, many of which are of undoubted value, whilst many, we believe, are not to be found in any other European publication. Having finished these preliminary trips, the Baboo entered upon a tour through the North-Western Provinces about the year 1860, when the memory of the Mutiny was still fresh in the minds of the people, and before the railway could carry its crowds of passengers through the whole extent of Hindoostan. He proceeded from Raneegunj by the Grand Trunk Road, and visited Pariswath, Sasseeram, Benares, Allahabad, Cawnpore, Agra, Muttra, and Brindabun. His description of Brindabun, the great centre of the worship of Krishna, forms one of the most interesting and

valuable portions of the entire work; and if the eye of the pilgrim sometimes wandered from the sacred temples to the fairer portion of the worshippers, his remarks only add a human interest to scenes, which, after all, are somewhat strange and unintelligible to European minds. In 1866 he paid a second visit to Delhi, and his antiquarian notices of that city and its ancient suburbs display an amount of investigation and research which are highly creditable to the writer, and his results are worthy of far more notice than can be awarded them in the present Introduction.

As regards the narrative generally, the Baboo has evidently endeavoured to combine all such legendary and positive history of the places he visited as would prove interesting to readers and travellers. He has presented pictures of varied scenes in the light and colouring in which they appeared before his own eyes; and has diversified the details of his information by references to local traditions, objects of antiquarian interest, social and religious institutions, and the manners, customs, and thoughts of his countrymen. In a word, whilst he has dwelt upon scenes and objects with the view of affording materials for Indian history, he has portrayed Hindoo life as it meets the eye in the present day.

Indeed, a journey up the valley of the Ganges and Jumna from Calcutta to Delhi is unequalled in objects of human interest by any other journey in the world. From Calcutta, the city of palaces, the finest European city in the Eastern hemisphere, and where European civilization reigns supreme, the Oriental pilgrim is carried perhaps in the first instance to Benares, the city beloved by the gods, with its mass of temples, ghâts, and dwelling-houses, crowding the banks of the holy stream for a distance of some miles. The narrow busy streets with pagodas on all sides; the gay bazars teeming with Native manufactures; the mysterious

temples with sacred bulls stabled in the holy precincts; the thousands and thousands of people washing away their sins in the Ganges; the idols, flowers, sprinklings with waters, readings of sacred books, prayers of Brahmans, clamouring of beggars for alms, and tokens of religious worship in all directions;—all tend to wean away the mind from European ideas, and impress it with a deep sense of ignorance as regards the yearnings and aspirations of millions of fellow-creatures. From Benares again the traveller may be carried to Allahabad, where the holy rivers of Jumna and Ganges are united in a single stream; and the religious mind of the Hindoo is filled with a deep reverential awe at the mingling of the waters, which has its source in a fetische worship which is as old as the hills, and flourished in patriarchal times. This religious feeling finds expression in a great festival which is held at the junction of the rivers; and the European is distracted by the thousand and one nondescript scenes which meet the eye at a Hindoo fair; the jumbling up of the pilgrimages of the Middle Ages with the civilization of the nineteenth century; the conjurors, jugglers, faqueers, women and children in countless numbers; the hundreds of vehicles, the endless stalls, idols, and lucifer matches, books and sweetmeats, brass pots, gilt caps, cedar pencils, toys, note paper, marbles, red powder, and waving flags. From thence the traveller may be conducted to Agra and Delhi, from the centres of Hindooism to the centres of Islam in India. The marble palaces with graceful arches, slender columns, and screens like lace-work. The magnificent Taj with its dome of white marble, and its exquisite interior inlaid with flowers and birds in coloured gems, which, in the language of Heber, seems to have been built by giants and finished by jewellers. Above all there are the wondrous mosques, decorated with holy texts from the Koran; the cloistered gardens in vast quadrangles

where fountains are ever playing; and the marble tombs to which streams of pious Mussulmans are ever going on pilgrimage to scatter a few flowers upon the sacred shrines, and to offer up prayers to the prophet of Islam. But there is no space here to dwell longer upon the scenes which our Hindoo traveller has described so well; and with this brief Introduction of himself and his Travels, we leave him to tell his own story, assuring the European reader that, notwithstanding the novelty of the names and scenes, it will well repay a careful perusal.

J. TALBOYS WHEELER.

Calcutta, 9th September, 1868.

TRAVELS OF A HINDOO.

CHAPTER I.

If any man would keep a faithful account of what he had seen and heard himself, it must, in whatever hands, prove an interesting thing.—*Horace Walpole.*

From the diary kept of our several journeys, the date of our first and earliest trip up the Hooghly appears to be the 11th of February, 1845. This is now so far back as to seem quite in the 'olden time'—in the days of the budgerow and bholio, of tow-ropes and punt-poles, all now things of the past, and irrevocably gone to obsoletism. It being the order of the day to 'get over the greatest possible amount of ground in the smallest possible amount of time,' the reader, perhaps, trembles at the mention of by-gones, but let him take courage, and we promise not to be a bore, but let him off easily.

In the times to which we allude, one was not so independent of the elements as now. The hour, therefore, of our embarkation was as propitious as could be wished. Both Neptune and Æolus seemed to look

down with complacency upon our undertaking;—the one, favouring us with the tide just set in; and the other, with a fresh full breeze blowing from the south. Thanks to their kind old godships! But, unhappily, we have not to relate here the adventures of an Ulysses or a Sinbad. Ours is a lowly tale of matter-of-fact, drawn from the scenes of every-day life, and from the sights of everybody's familiarity. It is undertaken with no other motive than to give a little work to our humble 'grey goose quill,' and is presented to the public with the parting exclamation of the poet, 'Would it were worthier.'

It was, then, about the middle of February, 1845, that we set out upon our excursion. Under the auspices of a favourable wind and tide, our boat sharply and merrily cut along its way, while we stood upon its deck to descry the fading forms of the Mint and Metcalfe Hall, that gradually receded from the view. In less than twenty minutes we cleared the canal, and passed by *Chitpore*, so called from the Kali Chitraswari of that village. She is one of those old images to whom many a human sacrifice has been offered under the *régime* of the Brahmins. It is said of her, that a party of boatmen was rowing up the river to the sound of a melodious strain. Heightened by the stillness of the night, the plaintive carol came in a rich harmony to the ears of the goddess. She then sat facing the east, but, turning to hear the song of the boatmen as they passed by her ghât, she had her face turned towards the river ever since.

Next we came to *Cossipore*—the enamelled village of the native rose and the exiled daisy, and the classic spot over which the muse has flung many a soft and sacred enchantment.* The gay villas with which it is studded, and the bloom and beauty of its *parterres*, reflect a picture in the calm mirror of the waters, that reminds us of the lines,—

> 'I saw from out the wave her structures rise,
> As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand.'

From *Cossipore* to *Burranagur*. Nearly two hundred years ago this was an important mart of traffic belonging to the Dutch. But it was then also so much the resort of bad women from different parts of the country, that it was appellatized by the early English travellers as 'the Paphos of Calcutta.' Now-a-days, it forms the retreat of the mercantile *élite* from the cares and vexations of the Ditch, and the merry scene of native holiday pic-nics. The next place is *Duckinasore*—said, in days gone by, to have been the seat of a Mussulman prince. It is now covered by extensive gardens, gay with brilliant and variegated flowers, and emerald lawns sloping to the water's edge.

Opposite to Duckinasore stands the village of *Balli*. This is a very old and orthodox place, mentioned in the Kobi Kunkun. It is doubtful, however, how Sreemunto could have sailed by this place, if the Ganges formerly held its course below Satgong—unless, in the age of the poet, the stream had flowed as it does in our day. Long had the ragged appearance of Balli, and its mud-built

* In allusion to the late author of the 'Literary Leaves,' who resided here for many years.

cottages given the lie to its great antiquity. It is noted for being an academy of Hindoo pundits in Lower Bengal. The creek to which it has lent its name affords a nice little inlet for a peep into rural life. Over that creek has been thrown now one of the largest and strongest bridges in Bengal.

Beautiful passage! The banks of the Hooghly, for miles, present the most gay and picturesque scenery. On either hand are gardens and orchards decked in an eternal verdure, and the eyes revel upon landscapes of the richest luxuriance. From the groves shine out the white villas of most tasteful and variegated architecture. Ghauts occur at short intervals, with their wide flights of steps from the banks into the water. Towns and villages turn up in rapid succession. Now, a wooded promontory stretching into the water bounds the view; then, a wide expanse of the river opens a most gorgeous vista. No part of Bengal exhibits such a high degree of populousness, and wealth, and civilization, as the valley of the Hooghly.

Our progress was from bank to bank, or in mid-stream, as the tide carried the boat. Passed *Penhatty*, in which is the *sumaj* of Raghub Pundit. He sleeps embowered under the shade of a madhavi tree, while the river flows immediately below with a soft gurgling song.

Little downwards of *Khurdah* is a spot, where we remembered to have seen, many a time, in our early days, the ironed skeleton of a highwayman suspended in the air. It reminded one of the period when robberies were committed by announcements in letters and

cartels to the householder—when honest burghers, falling into the hands of dacoits, were burnt to death by the flames of torches, and housewives were roasted alive in cauldrons of boiling oil.

Khurdah is a noted place for the residence of Nityanunda—the fellow-reformer of Choitunya. The latter retired to Nilachull, leaving his colleague at the head of the diocese in Bengal. Long a gad-about ascetic, Nityanunda at last took up his abode at Khurdah, and, falling in love with a Brahmin's daughter, led her to the hymeneal altar, and turned an honest Benedick in his old age. His descendants are the *Proroos* and *Gossains*, or 'Gentoo Bishops,' as Mr Holwell calls them. The Gossains promise to ferry you across the Bhubo-Sindhoo, or the Ocean of Life, upon their shoulders. But there is hardly a man among them who is sufficiently strong-built and broad-shouldered to execute the feat of carrying you across even the Hooghly. Now, that loaves and fishes are scarce, the Gossains are leaving off to announce themselves at the doors of their followers with flag-bearers, and *khootnies*, and hautboys, and taking to the European method of announcement by cards.

Mahesh, on the other side, is famous for being the scene where Juggernauth and his brother Balaram, having fasted the whole day, pawned a bracelet with a shopkeeper to procure some food. The ornament was missed by the Pandas (priests) on their return to Pooree, and they came to release it from the shopkeeper. Nearly three-quarters of a century ago, Warren Hastings had

his garden-house at Mahesh. One or two mango-trees of his planting were to be seen till very lately.

We then sailed by the spot memorable for the labours of Carey, Ward, and Marshman—those *avant*-couriers of the Messiah, who first came out to this country for gospelling its people. 'I do not know,' says Wilberforce, 'a finer instance of the moral sublime, than that a poor cobbler working in his stall, should conceive the idea of converting the Hindoos to Christianity—yet such was Dr Carey.'

Half a century ago, there was a dock-yard at Titahgur. The Dutch also brought their ships up to Chinsurah. Not only is the river silting up; but those were the days of small Portuguese carracks and Dutch galleons, and not of *Candias, Similas, Nubias,* and *Lady Jocelyns.*

Serampore is a snug little town that possesses an exceeding elegance and neatness of appearance. The range of houses along the river makes up a gay and brilliant picture. The interior keeps the promise which a distant view has given. It is the best-kept town in India. The streets are as brightly clean as the walks in a garden. There is not much bustle or activity—the place greatly wears the character of a suburban retreat. But time was, when there was a busy trade, and 'twenty-two ships cleared from this small port in the space of three months.' The Danes were here for ninety years. They seem to have been content with this inch of ground, like their old prince Hamlet, and 'counted themselves kings of infinite space.'

From the opposite shore, *Barrackpore*, with its pretty park and embowered vice-regal palace, bursts on the sight with a splendid view. Upwards of a century and a half ago, its rural precincts formed the Tusculum of that old Anglo-Indian patriarch, Mr Job Charnock, the founder of Calcutta. He used to come hither not so much to avoid the dust and bother of his bustling capital, as to be near that grave where there rested one with whom his heart still beat in sympathy. This alludes to his wife—a Hindoo woman, whom he had espoused after rescuing her from burning on the funeral pile of her deceased husband.

As a specimen of architecture, the Barrackpore palace has scarcely any claims to excellence. The Marquis of Wellesley had originally commenced this building with the intention of making it a suitable abode for one who had subverted the throne of Tippoo, humbled the gigantic power of the Mahrattas, and numbered among his *protégés* the Great Mogul of Delhi. But the work was stopped by a dictum of Leadenhall-street economy, the views of which have often proved a bed of Procrustes to many a noble undertaking. In the great hall, one may feel an unusual dilatation of spirit, and grow for the moment a most politic wiseacre, with big ideas, and state-views, and legislative this-and-that, filling the crannies of his head; but he has scarcely to witness any display of vice-regal grandeur, or engage his attention with anything in the shape of curiosity. The only sights with which one might beguile himself awhile, are a small but diversified collection of portraits

of different Indian characters. There are the representations of some Pindaree chieftains, in whose rugged features may be read the history of their lives. The picture of a young Rajah of Cuttack has all the truth of an Ooriya likeness.

The park, with its green slopes, and shady clumps of trees, and open lawns, and gay flower-beds—and the *ménagerie*, with its giraffes, tigers, rhinoceri, and bears, are very good for purposes of holiday recreation. The parade-ground is memorable for the execution of a Sepoy regiment, which refused, in 1824, to go across the *kalapane* to Burmah: they were surrounded here, and a discharge of grape poured into them. Here, too, did Mungul Pandy play the part of reading the prologue to the great drama of the Sepoy Rebellion, and got his name made memorable in Anglo-Indian slang.

From *Buddibati* to *Shaerafully*—thence to *Nemy-tirtha's* ghaut, which is sacred to the memory of Choitunya for his having halted and bathed here in the course of his wanderings. The heath of *Champdani* is notorious for piracies and murders in days gone by. Then comes *Ghiretti*—the country seat of the Governors of Chandernagore, and the scene of their opulence and splendour. There was a time when hundreds of carriages rolled over its beautiful lawn, now overgrown with wood and jungle. The Governor's house, described to have been one of the finest buildings in India, in whose lofty halls were assembled the beauty and fashion of the neighbouring European settlements, and where Clive, Hastings, and Sir William Jones had been enter-

tained, has become levelled with the dust and disappeared. Until a few years back, there could be seen a portion of this building, standing in an awfully dismantled state, through the long array of gloomy trees facing the river.

The French flag hoisted over *Chandernagore* meets the eye from a long way off. The place became a French settlement in 1673, but did not rise to importance till the time of Dupleix—the man who had the ambition, but not the resources, for playing the Napoleon of the East. It is said of him, that 'he was seen in the streets of Chandernagore with a fiddle in his hand and an umbrella over his head, running naked with some other young fellows, and playing tricks at every door.' During his administration, however, more than two thousand brick-houses were erected, and fifteen vessels, bearing French colours, traded to different ports from Mocha to the Manillas. But all this grandeur has passed away, and deserted houses, and silent streets, and neglected ghauts, and the absence of bustle and activity, give to Chandernagore the appearance of being devoid of life. The old fort, battered by the English fleet in 1757, is seen in ruins.

During the French Revolution, Chandernagore was all uproar and confusion. The banks of the Hooghly then exhibited the scene of that feud and ferment, and resounded with that cry of Liberty and Equality, which were in active operation on the shores of the Loire and Garonne. There was a band of two hundred cast-away seamen, who, headed by a bankrupt merchant and brief-

less lawyer, were foremost to kindle the flame of the revolution. Plunder only was their object, and riot their sole idea of reform. Goaded on by these motives, they committed every excess, and strove to outdo Robespierre. Their proceedings scared away the Governor, who fled to take refuge at Ghiretti. But he was dragged from this retreat, and thrown into a dungeon. Hitherto, Lord Cornwallis had offered no interference, but when he heard of the imprisonment of the French Governor, he sent to demand his release. The infuriated mob disregarded his request, and, in spite of it, prepared to send the Governor to the Isle of France. Happily, the vessel carrying him was seized by Lord Cornwallis, and all on board similarly destined were set with him at liberty. Chandernagore was now left to all the horrors of anarchy. One freak of caprice led the raving populace to elect a President, whom they 'drest in a little brief authority'—another prompted them to turn him out with insult and disgrace. Many a governor was thus made and unmade, till war broke out in Europe, and the English came and took quiet possession of the town in 1794. Twenty-two years afterwards, when everything had subsided into the calm of peace, it was restored to the French, since which it has remained in their possession.

Chandernagore is finely situated upon an elevated bank. The road along the river has been justly called by Jacquemont, 'a delicious promenade.' Now that the rail has shortened the journey to Chandernagore, it has produced a revolution in private habits, and men toiling

and transacting their business in the metropolis repair hither to recruit themselves in the country air. Under this reaction, Chandernagore is improving and abounding in country-seats and residences, and recovering a portion of its former splendour.

February 12.—Off *Chinsurah* this morning. The first streaks of sunlight resting upon the beautiful edifices, many of them abutting on the river, the town wore a brilliant appearance. Perhaps Chinsurah is now neater and prettier than when described by Rennel, some eighty years ago. The noblest building is the college—originally the residence of Monsieur Perron, the French General and Deputy of Scindia in the Doab. Chinsurah is a trim little town, quite free from the dirt and dust which drive a man almost mad in Calcutta. It is perfectly void of noise; no rattling of carriages to disturb the continuity of auricular repose, and no stench to offend the olfactory nerve. The place is excellent for a weekly dip into retirement from the eternal bustle of Cockneyism. No air of gloom that hangs over Chandernagore. There is more 'flow of the tide of human existence in its streets,' and more life and activity in its society.

The Dutch established themselves at Chinsurah in 1675. So long as they adhered to a steady prosecution of commerce, they were uniformly prosperous and successful. But at last they got tired of calculations and counting-house drudgery; power and politics became their pets, and they hoped for another Plassey-affair for themselves. This set Mynheer and John Bull by the

ears, and the former was crippled for aye in the contest. The field of Bidera, where they met in the tug of war, is about four miles to the west of the town. Here Colonel Forde waited for a written authority to commence the attack. His note reached Clive when he was playing at cards, but without quitting his seat he wrote in pencil,—'Dear Forde, fight them immediately, and I will send you the Order of Council to-morrow.' There is another memorable story of 'to-morrow,' though not of the same tenor. It is when Sir Colin Campbell was appointed Commander-in-Chief, and was telegramed to state when he could start. His emphatic and Spartan laconic reply was 'To-morrow.'

Chinsurah is the place where was invented the *Punkah*, by one of its Dutch Governors, at the close of the last century. The place was made over to the English about forty years ago, in exchange for Java—'brass for gold.' Nothing remains to tell now 'that it once belonged to the Dutch, except the escutcheons of the Governors that still continue to adorn the walls of its church.'

Reached *Hooghly*-ghaut. Near this was the old fort of the Portuguese. Probably, a huge piece of old masonry, that we saw to be dashed by and made the sport of the waters, was the last solitary remnant of that fortress. Hooghly is supposed to have been founded by the Portuguese in 1537. They used to kidnap or buy up children, to make converts of them, and then send them to be sold for slaves in different markets of India. In his need, Shah Jehan had solicited aid of the Portu-

guese troops and artillery at Hooghly. The Governor had not only refused that aid, but had also reproached him as a rebel. The taunt was treasured up for an opportunity of revenge. It came before long, and 'Expel the idolaters from my dominions' was the brief but decisive mandate of the Emperor. To the very letter was this mandate carried into execution. The fort was taken after a siege of three months and a half by assault. More than a thousand Portuguese were slaughtered, and 4400 men, women, and children were made prisoners of war. Out of three hundred and four vessels of all sizes, only three made their escape. The best-looking young persons were sent to Agra, and circumcised and made Mussulmans. The girls were distributed among the harems of the Emperor and his nobility. Not a trace was left of the Portuguese in Bengal; and, excepting the Portuguese church and the Portuguese surtout, with its hanging sinecure sleeves (our *lapadas*, we mean), which had been introduced by them into the Indian wardrobe, and remained in fashion till the last generation,—the Portuguese name was almost forgotten in this part of India. On Hooghly falling into the hands of the Moguls, the seat of the royal port of Bengal was removed hither from Satgaon. The charge of the new emporium was given to an officer, called Foujdar; the last of those functionaries, Manickchand, having the latest name on record as a son of Mars among the non-military Bengalees.

One of the noblest buildings in Bengal is the *Emambarra* of Hooghly. The court-yard is spacious

and grand. The trough in the middle is a little-sized tank. The two-storied buildings, all round, are neat and elegant. The great hall has a royal magnificence. But it is profusely adorned, in the Mahomedan taste, with chandeliers, and lanterns, and wall-shades of all the colours of the rainbow. The surface of the walls is painted in blue and red inscriptions from the Koran. Nothing can be more gorgeous than the doors of the gateway. They are richly gilded all over, and upon them is inscribed, in golden letters, the date and history of the Musjeed.

No circumstance should render the name of Hooghly so memorable, as its being the place where was first set up, in our country, the Press, which Bulwer emphatically calls 'our second Saviour.' It was put up in 1778 by Messrs Hulhed and Wilkins, on the occasion of the publication of a Bengallee Grammar by the first of these two gentlemen. From that year was Hindoo literature emancipated, and emancipated for ever, from the mystification and falsification of the Brahmins. The great event is scarcely remembered, and has not been thought worth taking notice of by any of our historians, though it has done far more for our civilization and well-being than can be hoped for from railroads and telegraphs.

The *Bandel church* is the oldest Christian church in Bengal, built, according to the inscribed date, in 1599. The Portuguese Jesuits had very much disgusted the Empress Mumtaza by their worship of pictures and images, and this feeling had no small share in bringing about the destruction of the Portuguese Settlement.

Prior to Hooghly, the royal port of Bengal was *Satgaon*. The Ganges formerly flowed by this place, and came out near Andool. There have turned out the remains of wrecked vessels beneath the earth which has overlaid the bed of the deserted channel. Satgaon is of great antiquity, having been known to the Romans under the name of *Ganges Regia*. It is said to have been a royal city, of immense size, in which resided the kings of the country. The first Europeans who came to Bengal describe two ports,—one Chittagong, the other Satgaon. The Dutch of Chinsurah had many country-seats here in the last century. Probably, the diversion of the course of the Ganges first led to the decay of this emporium of trade. The ultimate erection of Hooghly into the royal port occasioned its total ruin. It is now a mean village, without any remains of its former greatness, except a small elegant mosque. Literally, Satgaon or Supta-gram means the 'seven villages.' The well-known Mullick families of Calcutta are originally from Satgaon, whence they removed to Hooghly, and thence to Calcutta.

Came to *Triveni*, or the junction of three waters; a sacred *prayag* like Allahabad, where is held an annual *mêla* in March for purposes of ablution. Long had this been the *ultima thule* of a Calcutta cockney, beyond which he scarcely made a voyage into the regions of the Mofussil Proper. Triveni is also a very old place, being spoken of by both Pliny and Ptolemy. It is a school of great repute for indigenous Sanscrit. The great Pundit Juggernauth Turkopunchanun, who was Sanscrit tutor

to Sir William Jones, and who compiled the digest of Hindoo laws, under the patronage of Lord Cornwallis, was a native of this village. He had an extraordinary memory, and an anecdote is related of him, that as he was coming home one day from his bath in the Ganges, he met a Kaffer and Chinaman abusing and fighting with each other in the streets. The case coming to the police, he was subpœnaed for evidence. He came and told to the magistrate that he had neither understood the language of the Kaffer nor that of the Chinaman, but he remembered the words each had uttered, and exactly repeated them from his memory, to the astonishment of all. Beyond Triveni commences the regular world of rurality. Brick-houses are now rarely seen, and ghauts and pagodas occur at long intervals. The river now expands in a broader surface, but loses the grandeur of its prospect by the interruption of sand-banks.

Four miles north of Triveni is *Doomurdah*. This is an extremely poor village, but noted very much for its robbers and river dacoits. To this day people fear to pass by this place after sunset, and no boats are ever moored at its ghaut, even in broad day-light. Traders, on their way home with the accumulated savings of the year, ran considerable risk of being stopped, plundered, and murdered near Doomurdah. Men, receiving their pay and annual *buckshish*, and returning once in a twelvemonth at the Poojah holidays to their country residences—where 'there was an eye that would mark their coming, and look brighter when they came'—and where the

'Children ran to lisp their sire's return,
And climb'd the knees the envied kiss to share,'

had, in hundreds of instances, to deliver their purses, and then fall victims to the pirates, who either threw them overboard, or sprung a leak in their boats. The famous robber-chief, known by the name of Bishonauth Baboo, lived here about sixty years ago. It was his practice to afford shelter to all wayworn and benighted travellers, and to treat them with every show of courtesy and hospitality. But all this profuse display of kind-heartedness at last terminated in the midnight murder of the guests in their sleep. Many were the victims thus hugged into snares, and then committed quietly to the peace of a watery grave, before his deadly deeds transpired to the public, and he was caught to end his days on the scaffold. His depredations extended as far as Jessore, and his whereabouts being never certainly known, he long eluded the search of the police. He was at length betrayed by one of his comrades, surrounded in the hut of his courtesan in the midst of a jungle, seized when overcome by wine, and then hanged on the spot to strike terror into the neighbourhood. The house in which he lived still stands; it is a two-storied brick-built house just overlooking the river, whence he used to

'Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
With all the thirsting eye of enterprise.'

Past associations give to Doomurdah a gloomy and dismal look. The inhabitants are all *jellas* and *mallas*—boatmen and fishermen—many of whose fishing-nets

were drying in the sun. They are, or rather were, every one of them leagued together to fish by day, and cut throats at night.

Fifty years ago there were many noble houses in *Sooksagur*. The Marquis of Cornwallis often came hither to spend the summer months, now passed by the Viceroy in Simla. This was the country-seat of our Governors previous to the erection of the park at Barrackpore. The Revenue Board was also established here on its removal from Moorshedabad. The river has encroached upon and washed away the greater part of Sooksagur, leaving not a vestige of its numerous buildings. In the great inundation of 1823 a good-sized pinnace sailed through the Sooksagur bazar.

Chagdah, or Chackra-dah, is an abyss said to have been made by the chariot-wheel of Bhagiruth. The legend points to an antiquity, which is not borne out by any old vestiges or ancient population. The place is at best a mart, or outlet, for the agricultural produce of the neighbouring districts, being crowded with warehouses and brothels that generally compose an Indian bazar. There is always a large number of boats moored at the ghauts. The place is also a great Golgotha, where the dead and dying are brought from a great way off to be burnt and consigned to the Ganges. The deceased is seldom conveyed by any of his relatives, unless from a short distance. Poor people generally send forward their dead for incremation in charge of bearers, who never betray the trust reposed in them.

On the opposite side of the river is *Bullagur*, the abode of Gossains and Koolins, of Vaishnavas and Vaidyas. Next is *Goopteeparah*, the Brahmins of which were once famed for the brilliancy of their wit and the purity of their Bengalee. It was, in those days, the innocent diversion of the rich Hindoos to listen to witty sayings, to laugh at the antics of buffoons, to hear ventriloquists, story-tellers, and songsters, for relaxation after the serious business of the day, all of which have been now banished from their *boitukkhanas* by the brandy-bottle and its concomitants. Instances are known in which a witty saying has procured grants of land, or release from a bond of debt.

Goopteeparah is also a seat of Hindoo learning, and has produced some remarkable scholars. But it is more famous for its monkeys than its Pundits. The former swarm here in large numbers, and are mischievous enough to break women's water-pots. It has become a native proverb that to ask a man whether he comes from Goopteeparah, is as much as to call him a monkey. 'Raja Krishna Chunder Roy is said to have procured monkeys from Goopteeparah, and to have married them at Krishnugger, and on the occasion to have invited Pundits from Nuddea, Goopteeparah, Ula, and Santipoor; the expenses of the nuptials cost about half a lac.' If one were to comment upon this now, he must suspect the Rajah to have found a kinship between the two, or he would not have confounded Pundits with monkeys.

February 13th.—In the last century the Ganges

flowed immediately below *Santipoor.*° Now, in front of that town, is a large sand-bank, behind which it rises with all its details. On Rennel's map, the position of Santipoor is at a considerable distance from the river.

Most probably Santipoor has existed from remote ages. But its antiquity cannot be traced beyond the fifteenth century. The earliest known voyage down the Bhageruttee was made in the age of Asoka, who sent his son Mahindra with a branch of Buddha's sacred peepul tree on a mission to the king of Ceylon. But few particulars of that voyage have been preserved in the Buddhistical books. The Chinese traveller, Fa Hian, returned home by this way across the sea in the fifth century, and it would be interesting if any of the places on his route could be identified. There is, no doubt, a small nucleus of truth in the tales of Chand Saodagur's and Sreemunto's voyages, but it is buried too deep in a mass of fiction to be ever able to give us the benefit of its light. The earliest authentic mention of Santipoor is found in the history of Choitunya. It is a place sacred to the Vaishnavas for the birth and abode of his friend and follower, Adwaita.

The sand-bank, now in front of the town, would not be a mile in breadth from the ghaut. But Holwell, who was landed here on his way to Moorshudabad, after the horrors of the Black Hole, says, that 'he was marched up to the Zemindar of Santipoor in a scorching sun near noon, for more than a mile and a half, his legs running in a stream of blood from the irritation of the iron.' Once Santipoor was a large, populous, and manu-

facturing town. It was then the seat of the commercial Residency of the East India Company. The Marquis of Wellesley spent here two days, in the magnificent house, with marble floors, built at the cost of a lac of rupees, for the Resident. In 1822, the place is described to have had '50,000 inhabitants at least, and 20,000 houses, many of which were built of brick, and exhibit evident marks of antiquity.' Now it has not half this number of houses. The place, however, still enjoys a great repute for the manufacture of fine cotton cloths—it being, in this respect, next to Dacca in Bengal. There are yet in Santipoor upwards of ten thousand families of weavers and tailors.

The descendants of Nityanundo are Gossains of Khurdah. The descendants of Adwaita are Gossains of Santipoor. There, the principal idol is Shamsoonder. Here, the principal idol is Shamchand. One-third of the people of Santipoor are Vaishnavas. There are yet many *toles*, or seminaries, in this town, but much fewer than in former times. No Brahmin, however, now marries 100 wives, nor does any widow think of sutteeism, but re-marriage. The *Baroary Poojah*, that used to be celebrated here with the greatest *éclat*, has also gone out of vogue. In one of these poojahs a party of Brahmins had assembled to drink and carouse. Under the effects of liquor, one of them proposed to offer a sacrifice to Kali, to which the others assented. But having nothing to sacrifice, one of the Brahmins cried out, Where is the goat? on which another, more drunk than the rest, exclaimed, I will be the goat! and

at once placed himself on his knees, when one of the company cut off his head with the sacrificial knife. Next morning they found they had murdered their companion in a drunken fit, and the halter staring them in the face, they had the corpse taken to the river and burned, and reported that the man died of cholera.

In the Santipoor women are observed that light female form, that slender and delicate make, that graceful shape and elegance of proportions, and that smooth, soft body, which constitute the native beauty of Bengal. They have a great repute for their hair-braiding, to which the poet has done justice in the *Biddya Soondra*. But Milton's 'amorous nets' are in Bharutchunder 'snaky braids.' Lively conversation, and sparkling wit, also distinguish the Santipoor women.

February 14*th*.—Set out for *Kulna*, a fine little town, nestled in the bosom of a rural and picturesque landscape. Though not so large as Santipoor, it is much more neat and elegant, and has better roads and bazars. The river formerly flowed behind the present town, where old Kulna now is. New Kulna is entirely the creation of the Rajah of Burdwan. Here he, as well as his Rances, come to bathe on a festival, and the two places are connected by a road with bungalows, stables, and tanks every eight miles. Tieffenthaler speaks of old Kulna. The river is again deserting the new town, and its *gunge* or mart has considerably fallen off from its prosperity.

The first thing one goes to see in Kulna is the *Rajbaree* of the Rajah of Burdwan. It consists of

several noble buildings and lofty temples—the latter ranged in two circles, one within the other, enclosing a large circular paved court-yard, and forming a grand amphitheatre. One of the latest temples is most elaborately carved and ornamented. There is an alms-house in which several hundreds of beggars are daily fed.

The next object is the *Sumaj-baree*, or House of Sepulchre, where a bone of every deceased member of the Rajah's family is deposited. The Rajah belongs to the Khetrya class, and observes the custom of preserving the ashes of the dead. · He must have adopted this in imitation of the princes of Rajpootana, or, otherwise, he cannot find any authority in old Menu to sanction the proceedings. They show you here the bone of the last Rajah, wrapt up in a rich cloth. It is regarded as if the Rajah was living himself, and is placed on a velvet *musnud* with cushions, and silver salvers, tumblers, hookas, rose-water and uttur-holders in front of the seat, just as the late Rajah used to sit with all the paraphernalia of state about him.

February 20th.—Very bright and beautiful morn. Old Sol, the earliest riser of all, found us to have been already up and moving. There was balm in the pure river air more recruiting than all the iron tonics of allopathy. The bore used to come up as far as Nuddea in Sir William Jones's time. But there is no tide up here in our days; its force is spent below Goopteeparah, and there is only a little swell of the waters as far as Kulna. Proceeded walking along the shore, while the

boat followed us behind pulled by the tow-rope. Our pedestrian excursion this morning afforded us the opportunity of inquiring into the means and circumstances of many a rustic family. The condition of our peasantry is best known by a visit to their domiciles. From increased cultivation and from increased export of produce, the statesman may conclude the agriculturist to be thriving. But he still dwells in a ragged hut, and still lives upon the coarsest rice. He still sleeps upon a pallet of straw; and a few earthen pots, one or two brass utensils, and some scanty rags, filled with the dirt of a twelvemonth, constitute all his furniture and clothing. He still works out his existence like the beast that he drives in the field, and is a stranger to the civilization and enlightenment which have followed in the train of British rule.

Near Mirzapore was to have been dug a canal from that place to Rajmahal, proposed by the Military Board some twenty years ago. The village is still situated 'on a beautiful arm of the river, and presents some of the most enchanting rural scenery that one has to see in India.' By nine o'clock, a little wind sprung up, and the boat flew onwards like a merry falcon on the pinions of the breeze. Before noon we cleared many a winding and shifting of the river, and came in sight of the far-famed, the classic, and the holy town of *Nuddea.*

Throughout Bengal, Nuddea is celebrated as the great seat of Hindoo learning and orthodoxy—the most sacred place of Hindoo retreat. The Choitunya Bhagbut states:—'No place is equal to Nuddea in earth,

because Choitunya was there incarnated. No one can tell the wealth of Nuddea. If people read, in Nuddea they find the *ras* of learning, and the number of students is innumerable.' Indeed, the past of Nuddea raises very high expectations—but the present of it disappoints a man in the extreme. It is not found to be that hoary old town, with venerable ruins and vestiges, a crowd of temples and buildings of all epochs, a thick and ancient population, time-honoured toles and colleges in every street, and numbers of learned *Turkolunkas* and *Nyaruttuns*, which one has reason to expect from its antiquity extending at the least over a period of six to seven hundred years. Nothing of the kind meets the eye, but a rural town of small size, with a little nucleus of habitations, and a community of Brahmins, rather busy in seeking for bread than in acquiring a profitless learning. The caprices and changes of the river have not left a trace of old Nuddea. It is now partly *chur land*, and partly the bed of the stream that flows to the north of the town. The Ganges formerly held a westerly course, and old Nuddea was on the same side with Krishnagur. Fifty years ago it was swept away by the river, and the 'handsome Mahomedan College,' that, in 1805, says Lord Valentia, 'was for three hours in sight, and bore from us at every point of the compass during the time,' has been washed away and ingulfed in the stream.

Modern Nuddea, or Nabadweep, however, is situated in a delightful spot. The Bhagiruttee and Jellingy here meet together their sister streams, and flow with

an united volume of waters through a tract of the highest rural beauty. The town is now surrounded by bleak, desolate sand-banks; but, during the rains, it floats as a beautiful green islet on the bosom of an expansive sheet of water.

The earliest tradition relating to Nuddea states that two hermits of Billogram and Dhattigram retired here, when it was covered by a dense mass of jungles, to prosecute their studies in the recesses of its solitude. They attracted a number of learned men to the spot, whose fervent zeal in the pursuit of learning so pleased the goddess Seraswatee that she deigned to pay a visit to her votaries.

From other mouths we heard the following account of the circumstances that first led to the occupation and rise of Nuddea. A Hindoo monarch of the name of Kasinauth, having set out upon a party of pleasure, happened to come down the river as far as Nuddea. It was then overgrown by jungle, and scarcely known to any individual. But the Rajah was so much charmed with the romantic spot, that he at once resolved upon making it the capital of his kingdom. His resolution was no sooner taken than orders were given to clear the jungles, and to erect a palace for his abode. Rajah Kasinauth removed hither with his court, and brought over with him three families of Brahmins, and nine husbandmen to people his newly-founded capital.

Ridiculous!—to found a capital and people it only with a dozen of men. Besides, no Rajah under the name of Kasinauth is mentioned in history. The

nomenclature followed in those days was different from that in vogue now. Hindoo parents now name their sons and daughters after their favourite gods. The name of Kasinauth is plainly a modern coinage.

No reliable information can be obtained as to the time and circumstances of the origin of Nuddea. The earliest authentic fact on record about it is, that, in the twelfth century, it was the capital of Luchmunya, the last of the Sena Rajahs of Bengal. This prince was very learned, and enjoyed the throne for eighty years —the longest that any monarch is known to have reigned. He was in his mother's womb when his father died. The crown was therefore placed on the womb, and the officers of state, all girding themselves and standing in a circle round the mother, made their obeisance. On the approach of the pains in due course of time, the Ranee assembled the astrologers and Brahmins to consult on the most auspicious moment for the birth of the child. They unanimously declared that it would be unfortunate for the prince to be born immediately; the stars would be favourable two hours hence, when his birth would destine him to a reign for eighty years. The intrepid lady resolved on this to postpone her accouchement, and gave orders to her attendants to keep her suspended by the feet till the particular hour specified by the astrologers. She was then taken down; the prince was born, but the mother died of the sufferings to which she had subjected herself. The child was immediately placed on the throne, and the commencement of his reign dated from that instant.

Luchmunya is stated to have been the 'Rajah of Rajahs of Hind'—'the Caliph of India.' But Brahmin learning and Brahmin idolatry, Brahmin courtiers and Brahmin astrologers, had superinduced that paralytic helplessness and lethargy, under which the last Hindoo monarchs yielded, one by one, to the first violent shock from without, and the ill-cemented parts of the great Hindoo empire fell to pieces, and were dissolved. There was Bukhtyar Khiligy in Behar, the capital of which had been taken by him only with a detachment of two hundred men, casting his eyes next upon Bengal. But, instead of catching the bull by its horns, the foretold dominion of the Toork in the Shastras was a foregone conclusion to its Rajah of the inevitable subjugation of his kingdom. Far from preparing to oppose in defence of their country and religion, the nobles and chief inhabitants of Nuddea sent away their property and families to a safe distance from the reach of the enemy. The old and imbecile monarch took no measures to avoid the danger, but waited in the infallible certainty of its occurrence. He was seated at dinner when the enemy surprised him, and, making his escape from the palace by a private door, got on board a small boat, and dropped down the river with the utmost expedition to reach Juggernauth, and there give up his soul to the god. Only seventeen soldiers worked this revolution in the destiny of some forty millions of people, and in the fate of the largest and richest province of the peninsula. The conquest seems to have been made merely by giving a slap on the face of the king, and then taking pos-

session of his throne. It bespeaks a degeneracy and an indifference, a languor and torpidity, a lack of the martial will and disposition, which form the standing reproach of the Bengalees.

Well may have Bukhtyar written the bulletin of his conquest of Bengal to his imperial master, in the words of Cæsar, '*Veni, vidi, vici.*' He gave up Nuddea to be sacked and plundered by his troops, and, proceeding to Gour, established himself in that ancient city as the capital of his dominions.

From the Mussulman conquest of Bengal in 1203 to the end of the fifteenth century, the history of Nuddea again forms a blank. The removal of the seat of government must have led to its decay and insignificance. It did not, however, altogether cease to exist, but continued a seat of learning, where many a Pundit, learned in law and theology, rose to distinguish himself, and shed a lustre over the place.

The brightest epoch in the history of Nuddea dates from the era of Choitunya. Regarded by his adversaries as a heresiarch, worshipped by his followers as an incarnation, he is now truly appreciated by the discerning generations of the nineteenth century as a Reformer. Choitunya was born at Nuddea in 1485, His father was a Baidik Brahmin, who had removed hither from Sylhet. From his early childhood Choitunya gave signs of an eccentric disposition, but he possessed a very superior intellect, and the purest morals. He had also a very affectionate heart, and simple, winning manners. The age in which Choi-

tunya was born, had been preceded by one of great religious reforms and innovations. There was Ramanund, who had revived the anti-caste movement. There was Kubeer, who repudiated alike the Shasters and the Koran, and preached an universal religion. Choitunya was brought up in the faith of a Vaishnava, but his opinions took a great tinge from the doctrines of his two immediate predecessors. In Bengal, Buddhism had maintained its supremacy up to the tenth century. On the accession of the Sena Princes, Shaivism gained the ascendancy, and predominated in the land. Under coalition with Sakti-ism, the worship of the emblems of the energy of man and the fruitfulness of woman had degenerated to the most abominable creed of the Tantra Shastras, first introduced in Nuddea, most probably, by some of its clever Pundits. The Tantric worship culminated in the worst forms of libertinism about the time of Choitunya. Two thousand years ago had a greater reformer viewed with disgust and a relenting heart the bloody rites and sacrifices of the Vedic *Yugyas*, and to reform the abuses had Buddha promulgated the doctrine of non-cruelty to animals. In like manner, the bacchanalian orgies of the Tantrics, and their worship of 'a shamefully exposed female,' had provoked the abhorrence of Choitunya, and roused his energy to remove the deep blots upon the national character. He commenced his labours by holding meetings of his immediate friends at the house of Sree Bhasa. In these meetings, he expounded the life and acts of Krishna. Passages in the *Bhagbat*

which every one understood in a literal sense, he construed figuratively; and, by striking upon the emotional chord of our nature, he thought of putting down sensualism by sentiment. In a little time, his enthusiasm affected hundreds, and gathered round him a body of disciples. His doctrines being aimed at the profligacies of the Tantrics committed under the mask of devotion, they became eager to put down his schism. But Choitunya was a tough antagonist, who established his mastery over the revilers and scouters. Having obtained the sympathies and support of a large class of men, he openly avowed his determination to uproot Tantricism, and establish the true Vaishnavism. He now publicly preached in the streets of Nuddea, and went forth in processions of *Kirtunwallahs*, propagating his doctrines through the villages of that district. On one of these occasions, as he passed *hurryboling* (taking the name of Heri) through the bazars and *hauts* of Nuddea, a party of Tantrics, headed by two bullies and swaggerers, Jogai and Madhai, attacked to disperse his procession. But in vain were the hootings, the peltings, the interruptions, and the hostilities of the voluptuaries to arrest and turn back the movement. In the natural course of things, licence is always succeeded by restraint. The triumph of their adversaries, therefore, was helped by that re-action, which forms a law as well in the material as in the moral world. In time, their wassails, their debaucheries, and their loathsome vices, made them the most odious beings in the community, and they smarted under the wounds which

a purer and sentimental religion inflicted upon their sect.

In 1509, Choitunya, *alias* Nemye, formally renounced the world by embracing the life of an ascetic. He then wandered from place to place, travelled to Gour, proceeded to Benares, visited Brindabun and Poorce, teaching his sentimental theology, making numerous converts, and devoting all his energy, time, and life to the fulfilment of his mission. His peregrinations lasted for six years, at the end of which he retired to Nilachull, near Juggernauth, and, settling there, passed twelve years in an uninterrupted worship of that divinity. In his last days, his intense enthusiasm and fervour affected his sanity, and he is said to have drowned himself in the sea under the effects of a disordered brain.

It is not our object to dwell on the merits of his religious doctrines, though their scope and aim had been to proscribe vices and immoralities which had tainted all classes of the society and disgraced the nation, and to inculcate purity of thought and action as the medium of salvation. To his zealous followers, Choitunya may be an apostle, an incarnate deity. But it is as a reformer that he is to be looked upon in his true light, and esteemed by the statesmen of the nineteenth century. The abolition of caste, the introduction of widow-marriage, the extinction of polygamy, and the suppression of ghat-murders—are social reforms which a governor of our day would willingly undertake, and entitle himself to the blessings of genera-

tions of Hindoos. Choitunya had nearly all of these great reforms in his view to produce a change in the destinies of his nation. Though Ramanund and Kubeer had raised the first voice against the exclusiveness of Hindooism, it was Choitunya who properly inaugurated the anti-caste movement, to release the laity from the dominion and tyranny of the priesthood. He revived the old attempt of Buddha to obliterate the distinctions between a Brahmin and Sudra, and hence the animosity, the hostility, and the rancour of the Brahmins to his sect, similar to those with which the Buddhists had been opposed and persecuted for ages till their final annihilation. Hindoos of all castes are admitted into Choitunya's fraternity, and once admitted, are associated with on equal terms by all the brethren. His predecessors, Ramanund and Kubeer, had taken low-caste men for their disciples. But he scrupled not to permit even Mahomedans to enter his fold, and two of his most eminent followers, Rupa and Sonatun, were originally Mahomedan ministers in the court of Gour.

It is not on record how far the evils of polygamy had manifested themselves in the age of Choitunya. But it may be presumed that his contemporary Koolins drove a more thriving trade than their descendants of the eighteenth century, and often had two or three hundred wives to eke out their incomes by contributions upon their numerous fathers. The death of a single man risked the happiness of hundreds of females, and either Sutteeism or prostitutism often became their refuge

from the miseries of a widow-life? Choitunya must have witnessed and deplored the horrors of Sutteeism, and lamented the degradation of Hindoo females, before he could have had the incentive to interest himself in the amelioration of their condition. To him is due the credit of having first introduced that great social reform—the re-marriage of Hindoo widows, a measure which must be acknowledged to have an indirect tendency towards the suppression of Sutteeism. The liberal-minded Akber is said to have 'permitted widows to marry a second time, contrary to the Hindoo law; above all, he positively prohibited the burning of Hindoo widows against their will, and took effectual precautions to ascertain that their resolution was free and uninfluenced. On one occasion, hearing that the Rajah of Jodhpoor was about to force his son's widow to the pile, he mounted his horse and rode post to the spot to prevent the intended sacrifice.' But he cannot claim the merit of originality in these measures. He must have caught the cue from Choitunya, who preceded him by half a century, and whose doctrines had produced a great impression upon the age. The honour of the first innovator and reformer can never be denied to Choitunya, who left the plant to grow upon a sluggish soil. To Pundit Eswara Chundra Bidyasagur, should be conceded the credit of having revived a measure which had gone into desuetude, of making a dead letter take a fresh effect, of giving to it a political significance through the assistance of the legislature, of displaying the most energetic exertions, and a most

unexampled self-denial, especially amongst the Bengalees, in the carrying-out of that measure, and of maintaining his ground against disheartening crosses, losses, and disappointments. Justly has he entitled himself to be remembered by the Hindoo widows—and the rude portion of lower society has popularized his name in ballads sung about the streets, and in the borders of cloths chiefly esteemed by women, but history shall award the first place to Choitunya, and the next to him.

Old Menu was for burning and turning the dead into vapours. But Choitunya seems to have set aside his rule, and brought *sumajs*, or burials, into fashion. The most eminent of his followers have all of them the honours of sepulture done to their ashes. The sumaj is something between a Mahomedan burial and Menu's incremation. It entombs only a bone or the ashes of the dead. The sumaj of Joydeva has the priority of all in Bengal.

To nothing does Nuddea owe its celebrity so much as for its being the scene of the life and labours of Choitunya. On inquiring about the spot of his birth, they pointed to the middle of the stream which now flows through Old Nuddea. The Brahmins here revere him as an extraordinary man, but deny his incarnation. His own followers regard him as an Avatar, and pay to him divine honours. They have erected to him a temple, and placed in it his image with that of his great coadjutor, Nityanunda. One-fifth of the population of Bengal are now followers of Choitunya. Nearly

all the opulent families in Calcutta belong to his sect. He resuscitated Brindabun, and extended his influence to that remote quarter. But his tenets exercise their greatest influence in Bengal, where they have spread far and wide even up to Assam. Though he may not have succeeded in producing a general re-action in favour of the re-marriage of widows, he has put down Tantricism, its crimes and scandals, with a complete success. It is now rare to hear of *Bhoyrubee-chuckras*—none dare to incur the odium of their celebration, and become objects of derision. His successors, the Gossains, are still held in great veneration, and maintained by contributions from the flock. The innovations of Choitunya have produced an important era in Bengal, which deserves a prominent notice that history has not yet taken. His sect may justly boast of many illustrious names, of eminent scholars, and men of parts and learning. Choitunya's followers are known by the name of Byragees. The genuine Byragee is at once known from other men by his shaven head with a tuft in the middle, his naked person scarcely hid by any clothing, his body covered with prints of Heri's name and feet in *ghooteen*, his numerous strings of beads, his rosary and ever-twirling fingers, his smooth face, his soft manners, his urbane speech, and his up-turned nose at the name of fish. The Brahmin and the Bygaree have no sympathy between themselves. Each is the jest and butt of the other. The anti-caste movement inaugurated by Choitunya has been taken up by the *Kurtavajas*. Young Bengal filibusters about intermarriage, but nevertheless

the antipathy between a Kayest and Bunya is as strong as between a Hindoo and Mussulman.

From the temple of Choitunya we had to pass through a deserted quarter, where a hardly discernible trace of *debris* was pointed out as marking the site of Agum Bagish's abode. He it was who, Jupiter-like, first produced the image af Kali from his creative fancy, and instituted the worship of the female generative principle under that form. There is an impression that Kali is the goddess of the aborigines, and that she has been worshipped from the pre-Vedic ages. But a study of the history of the Hindoo religion, and its various phases, is highly suggestive of the foreign origin of Hindoo idolatry. The worship of *sacti* seems to have been introduced from the Egyptians and Assyrians, and the image of Doorga is unquestionably a modified type of Ken and Astarte. The image of Kali is an original of the Hindoos, the worship of which is inculcated in the Upa-Poorans, written at a considerably later period than the Poorans, which first originated the idolatry of the Hindoos. In the worship of Kali may be traced the first origin of Tantricism, and her image may have been first set up by Agum Bagish in Nuddea. The age of this sage is not remembered to clear up all doubts upon the subject; and it is also to be questioned whether the quarter in which the site of his house is pointed is a part of old Nuddea that has been spared by the river.

In proof of the great antiquity of Nuddea, the Brahmins show you their great tutelary goddess called

Pora-maee, a little piece of rough black stone painted with red ochre, and placed beneath the boughs of an aged banian tree. She is said to have been in the heart of the jungles with which Nuddea was originally covered, and to have suffered from the fire which Rajah Kasinauth's men had lighted up to burn down the jungles. The naturally black stone is supposed by them to have been charred by fire. The banian tree is at least a hundred years old. It is a proof that the river has not encroached upon this quarter of old Nuddea. Near Pora-maee, has been put up a very big image of Kali by Rajah Krishna Chunder Roy in a lofty temple.

The wealthiest man in Nuddea is a brazier by birth and profession, but who has risen to be a millionnaire. He has more than eight hundred braziery shops in all the principal towns and villages of Bengal, Orissa, and Hindoostan. In his house we saw a *Kam-dhenú*, reminding of old Vashishta's Nandini. The Kam-dhenú is a rare animal, which receives greater justice at the hands of Brahmins than of naturalists. It is a cow which gives milk without breeding, and is worshipped for its copiousness.

Much of Nuddea's fame rests upon its being an ancient seat of learning, which has exercised a great influence upon the politics, morals, and manners of the Bengalees. It is chiefly noted to be the great school of *Niaya* philosophy. But it has produced scholars in law, whose opinions still regulate the disposal of Hindoo property in Bengal, and rule the fate of Hindoo widows.

It has produced theologians, whose works counteract the progress of the Vaishnavas, Kurtavajas, and Brahmos. It still produces an annual almanack regulating the principal festivals, journeys and pilgrimages, launchings of boats, sowings of corn, reapings of harvests, and celebrations of marriages, in half Bengal.

Visited some of the *tolee* or seminaries—there were more than fifty of them, and the largest was kept by Sreeram Shiromonee. He had some forty students, among whom one was from Assam, another from Telingana, and a third from Kalee-ghaut. Sreeram Shiromonee was then the most learned Pundit in Bengal, and at the head of its literary world. He received his distinction at a large convention of Brahmins held in Bacla-Vikrampoor, near Dacca. They did not acknowledge him to be a bright genius, but a very erudite scholar. This headship in the world of letters is attained by successful wrangling, and Sreeram came off the most victorious controversialist on the occasion.

Half, at least, of what one hears about the learning of Nuddea, is still found to be true. The community is for the most part composed of Brahmins, who devote their lives to study for many years. There are Vaishnavas who possess a respectable body of literature. The very shop-keepers and sweetmeat-vendors are imbued with a tincture of learning. Many of these may not be able to spell their way through two lines, but would repeat a *sloka*, or quote a text. The women, too, have comparatively intelligent minds. Pupils are attracted to Nuddea from great distances, and often

spend half their life-time in their Alma-Maters. The truth of Menu's picture of a Brahmin, drawn three thousand years ago, may yet be recognized in Brahmin the *teacher*, and in Brahmin the *student*, by one who visits the *toles* of Nuddea.

But the place of the Brahmin in society has been completely changed by the advent of the English. Twice had the mind of India been roused to rise against Brahmin domination, and break through the barriers of caste. But the war, waged for centuries between the Buddhists and Brahmins for supremacy, terminated in the fall of the former. The reformatory efforts of Choitunya also have produced only an infinitesimal good. It has been far otherwise, however, with the results of the progress and spread of the English knowledge, which has dealt a greater blow to Brahmin power and religion than had been done by the fire and sword of the Mahomedans. It has ushered in a period of light, which has exposed him to be 'an ants' nest of lies and impostures.' It has silently worked a revolution producing deep and lasting effects, and elevating the Sudra from the level of the swine and oxen to which the Brahmin had degraded him. The introduction of a mighty force has overpowered the influence which was unfavourable to science, to civilization, and to the well-being of mankind. The Brahmin is no longer the sole depositary of knowledge—the tyrant of literature. He has lost the dictatorship which Menu had awarded to him. He has lost the ascendancy which was the natural reward of knowledge in ages of ignorance. The

Sudra, his menial, his slave, and his abomination, is now the great *parvenu* of the day. The Brahmin is no longer in the Council, but a Sudra *Deb*. The Brahmin is no longer on the Bench, but a Sudra *Mittra*. The Sudra is now the spokesman of the community. The Sudra now wields the pen. In the fulness of time, have the evils which the Brahmin perpetuated for his advantages recoiled upon his head. His vaunted learning, instead of being a qualification, is now his positive disqualification. It does not enable a man to shake off political servitude, to develope the resources of his country, to extend commerce, to navigate the seas, to construct railroads, and to communicate from Calcutta to London. Nobody now seeks the literary assistance or the spiritual advice of the Brahmin. He is scoffed at as an empiric, a mountebank, and a wise-acre. The legislature is closed to him because he does not understand a political question, and would not support the cause of a social reform. The courts are barred to him because he appreciates not the equality of justice, and punishes crime with 'tooth for tooth,' and 'eye for eye.' To be a Pundit now is to rust in obscurity and pine in poverty. He cannot find a patron now like Rajah Krishna Chunder Roy, under whom Nuddea flourished and abounded with learned men. He cannot have a Governor like Lord Minto to erect Sanscrit Colleges, and give him presents and khilluts. He cannot have a statue by the Viceroy, like that of the Pundit by the side of Warren Hastings in the Town Hall. There is now no encouragement to the *Turko-*

bagish of Nuddea—no prospect for him in life—no honour for his reward—beyond the gift of a hundred or two hundred rupees on the *shrad* of an orthodox millionnaire. His household and his children, therefore, now engage more of his cares than the antique tomes of his forefathers. Undoubtedly there are yet Pundits of great abilities and learning, who confer a great benefit upon society by preserving the rich treasures of Sanscrit lore—the precious inheritance of Aryan patrimony—from passing away into oblivion. But the great body of Brahmins have fallen into disrepute, and de-Brahminized themselves by taking to the service of the Mletcha and Sudra—by choosing to become quill-drivers in the Treasury, note-counters in the Bank, mohurrirs in the counting-house of a merchant, bill-collectors and bazar-sircars, cooks in native households, and companions of dissolute Baboos, rather than have stuck to a thankless profession.

Nearly all the great scholars of Oriental learning visited Nuddea in their days. Sir William Jones used to 'spend three months every year in the vicinity of this university.' Dr Carey came here in 1794, and wrote:—'Several of the most learned Pundits and Brahmins much wished us to settle here: and as this is the great place of Eastern learning we seemed inclined, especially as it is the bulwark of heathenism, which, if once carried, all the rest of the country must be laid open to us.' The learned Dr Leyden, who was the friend and associate of Sir Walter Scott, and the bosom friend of Sir Stamford Raffles, was 'for several months magis-

trate in Nuddea, where he was engaged bush-fighting in the jungles.' Dr Wilson also was a pilgrim to this famous shrine of learning. The Brahmins heard him with great wonder speak the Sanscrit language fluently. In the midst of his speech, he chanced to quote a passage from the Vedas, on which the Brahmins closed their ears against him, but the Doctor good-humouredly reminded them, 'Well, sirs, don't you know that your Veda remains no Veda, when it is uttered by a Mletcha?'

In Nuddea, we saw a *Jogee*, or Alexander's Gymnosophist, once very common in India, but now a rare sight. The generation has passed away, who saw the remarkable *Mahapurush* at the Ghosaul's of Kidderpoor. He was apparently a man about forty years of age, with a very fair complexion, and jet-black hair. He did not eat or drink anything, nor speak a word; but remained in a sitting posture, with his legs and thighs crossed, absorbed in meditation. His fasting did not appear to tell upon his health. To break and awake him from his meditations, smelling-salt had been held to his nose, hot brands had been applied to his body, he had been kept sunk in the river for hours, but nothing awoke him from his reveries, or made him utter a word. Both Europeans and natives flocked to see him, and came back wondering at the curious man. No plan succeeding, milk was at last forced down his throat, and afterwards more substantial food, when the cravings of his senses were gradually awakened, but he died in a few days of dysentery, confessing himself to have been a Buddhist. The *Burying Fakeer* of Runjeet Sing was another puzzle

to physiologists. The Jogee that we saw in Nuddea was then a mere neophyte. He was a young man of about five and twenty, who had been practising his austerities for ten or twelve years. He sat the whole day, near the edge of the water, under a burning sun, praying and meditating. In a small hole two feet long, cut in the shelving bank, he passed his nights. He had not yet been able to overcome the powers of his appetite, and lived upon one meal a day, of only rice and dall, served by his sister in the evening. He was trying to bring himself to exist on the smallest portion of food, till he would leave it off altogether. He did not speak with any men, and appeared to be in pretty good health.

To *Jahn-nugger*, which is about four miles west of Nuddea, and below which the Ganges formerly held its course. Here is a small old temple of Jahnuba Muni, who had such a capacious abdomen as to have drunk up the Ganges, and then let out its waters by an incision on one of his thighs. Immediately below the temple is traced the old bed of the river, annually flooded during the rains. In Jahn-nugger was a petty landlord, who, we were told, punished his defaulters by putting them in a house of ants. The Nabobs of Moorshedabad used to confine men for arrears of revenue to a house of bugs. *Brahmaditala*, in Jahn-nugger, is a spot where human sacrifices were formerly offered to an image of Doorga, and where a great mela is now annually held in July. One of the amusements in this mela, is the *jhapan*, or the exhibition of the skill of snake-catchers and snake-charmers, and their pharmacopiœa of antidotes. Natives,

who cannot seek the reputation at the cannon's mouth, will easily risk their lives by snake-bites, and die in a few hours.

Next, we set out for *Krishnugger*, which afforded us a bit of fine trip up the Jellingy. Once, 'so far north as Krishnugger' was a common phrase in the mouths of the Europeans of Calcutta. Now, that 'so far north' is at Simla, or Peshawur. In two hours, we towed up to the ghaut at Gowaree, and on landing, made our first peep at the Judge's Kutcherry, where the worthy Daniel sat immersed in 'petitions, despatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, and reports' of all descriptions.

On the road we found a number of convicts working in fetters. It will not be out of place to introduce an anecdote relative to these convicts:—'A magistrate, being anxious to cut a road through a forest, employed the convicts under his charge for that purpose. The labour was very great, and also exceedingly tedious in consequence of the difficulty which the men sustained in working in their manacles. The magistrate was known to be of a benevolent disposition, and a deputation of the convicts waited on him one day, and told him that if he would permit their fetters to be removed, and trust to their pledge that they would not take advantage of the facilities it would afford them for escape, he should not lose a single man; while the work would be more speedily and efficiently performed. The magistrate, after a short deliberation, determined to hazard the chance of what might have been a very serious affair to himself, and relieved the men from their chains.

Long before he could have expected its completion he had nine miles of broad road cleared; while the convicts returned voluntarily every night to their jail, and, as they had promised, he did not lose one of their number.'

Krishnugger has been named from Rajah Krishna Chunder Roy, whose memory is held in great veneration here. He was a rich and powerful Zemindar of the last century, who often expended his wealth upon worthy objects. He was a learned man himself, and a great patron of men of letters. The court he kept was frequented by all the wits and literati of his time in Bengal. It was in his court that Bharut Chunder wrote the charming tale of *Biddya Soondra*, which forms the staple amusement to all classes of the Bengalees, and stanzas from which are caroled in the streets and villages. Rajah Krishna Chunder was a great rival of the Rajah of Burdwan, and is said to have set Bharut Chunder to level the poem as a squib against his adversary.

The present Rajah has not a tithe of the grandeur of his great predecessor—an empty name alone remains his boast. We saw the young scion drive in a barouche-and-two. As he passed along, he received the homage of a bow from all persons on the road.

The mansion of the Krishnugger Rajah was found to be a hoary, antique-looking building, without any fashion or beauty. The greater part of it was ruined and dilapidated, only one or two gateways remained to attest its former magnificence.

> 'It was a vast and venerable pile,
> So old, it seemed only not to fall;
> Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.'

In a Kali-baree, close to the Rajah's dwelling-house, were shown the apartments occupied by Bharut Chunder. Rajah Krishna Chunder was a great Shaiva, who instituted many emblems of that god as well as images of Kali for worship. Throughout his Zemindary, his voice was dictatorial on matters of orthodoxy. It is for his days, for his *subhas*, for his encouragement of learning, for his opposition to the Vaishnavas, and for his punishment of heterodoxy, that the Brahmins of Nuddea pant.

In 1760, 'a meeting of Brahmins was held at Krishnugger before Clive and Verelst, who wished to have a Brahmin restored to his caste, which he had lost by being compelled to swallow a drop of cow's soup; the Brahmins declared it was impossible to restore him (though Ragunundun has decided in the *Prayaschitta Tutwa* that an atonement can be made when one loses caste by violence), and the man died soon after of a broken heart.' In 1807 there was 'a *Tapta Mukti*, or ordeal by hot clarified butter, tried before 7000 spectators on a young woman accused by her husband of adultery.' But the Krishnugger that was orthodox and bigoted, and highly conservative, and prohibited *dhobees* and barbers for loss of caste, and held Tapta Muktis, is now a warm and eager advocate for putting down idolatry, for the spread of Brahminism, for the re-marriage of widows, and for the suppression of polygamy.

Back to Nuddea, and thence to *Agradweep*, but not till the 23rd of August, 1846. It was blowing a little squall, and the rains having filled its bed to the brim, the Bhagirutee presented a broad, billowy surface. No

sand-banks to show up their heads now—the waters rolled over them full twenty feet deep. *Meertulla* is a dreary place, and a fit region for robbers and pirates.

Near *Patoolee*, the burning-ghaut presented a melancholy spectacle. The friends and relatives sat apart in a gloomy silence, gazing steadfastly upon the fiercely-burning faggots that consumed the deceased, whilst the young wife, doomed to perpetual widowhood, stood a little way off 'like Niobe all tears.' To European feelings, the burning of the dead is as horrid as the 'roasting' and 'cannibal feasting' of savages. But incremation is preferable in a sanatory point of view, and, probably, it first suggested itself to our Aryan forefathers, under the same notions that are now entertained by savans against the evil effects of burial.

In Rennel's time, *Agradweep* was situated on the left bank of the river—it is now on the right. The great annual *mela* of Agradweep is held in April, when hundreds of thousands come to 'see the image of Gopinath perform the *shrad* of Ghosh Thacoor, a disciple of Choitunya, who set up the idol three centuries ago. Brindabun has Agra or Agrabun: Nuddea has Agradweep. In 1763, the English defeated a body of Meer Cossim's troops in the neighbourhood of this village.

August 25th.—Cutwa is Arrian's *Katadupa.* Indeed, Katwadweep, and Agradweep, and Nabadweep, all refer to a period when they must have been regular *dweeps*, or islets, to have received such names. There is an allusion to Cutwa in the Kobin-kunkun, and a

description of it in the Dharma Pooran. Now a purely commercial town, Cutwa was formerly the military key of Moorshedabad. Moorshed Kuli Khan erected guard-houses here for the protection of travellers, and when a thief was caught, his body was split in two, and hung upon trees on the high road. In the early part of the eighteenth century, Cutwa had suffered much from the incursions of the Mahrattas. Their yearly ravages had depopulated all the principal towns and villages along the river, and converted the country into jungles, through which a traveller seldom ventured to pass without sounding instruments to scare away the tigers and boars. The retreat of Ali Verdi Khan, in 1742, before a large army of Mahrattas under Bhaskur Pundit, from Midnapore to Cutwa, through a miry country, without any food for his troops but grass and leaves of trees, and any shelter from the heavy rains, has been remarked to parallel 'the retreat of the ten thousand under Xenophon'

To the Vaishnavas, Cutwa is a sacred place of pilgrimage where Choitunya, flying from the roof of his parents, and leaving behind his wife, embraced *dundeeism* to shake off the obligations of society and the cares of a secular life. He was initiated into its rites by a Gossain, named Kesab Bharuty, and the hairs thrown from his head on the occasion are yet preserved in a little white temple. There are also two wooden images of Choitunya and Nityanunda, executed in a dancing attitude, as in a procession of their *Kirtuns*, for which they are objects of great curiosity.

Cutwa is famous in modern Bengal history, as the place where Clive halted on his route to Plassey in 1756. His cavalier heart lost its pluck for a moment, and he was dismayed at the prospect of the high game he was to play with a handful of men. In this crisis, he called a council of war—the first and last ever called by him—and it opined not to risk a battle. He then retired to meditate alone in the solitude of an adjacent mango-grove. There he seems to have been visited and inspired by the good genius of Britain, and, staying for an hour, came out with the word *Forward* on his lips, and ordered the army to cross the river next morning. Round Cutwa are many topes and groves of mango of various size and age. But in vain we looked for the memorable grove, where was taken the resolution that decided the fate of Bengal, and ultimately that of India.

In a commercial point of view, Cutwa is finely situated at the confluence of the Adjai and Bhagirutee. It is a considerable depôt of trade, being full of shops, and warehouses, and granaries of rice. They make here 'much fine stuffs of cotton and silk,' says Tieffenthaler. There is within six miles of Cutwa a population of one hundred thousand souls. The greater portion of this population follows Vaishnavism.

Coming back from our stroll through the town, we encountered a party of female choristers chanting their rude songs from door to door in the streets. The cause of their merriment was the celebration of some nuptials, when it is customary here for the women of the lower

classes to amuse themselves with singing hymeneals publicly. This provincialism was something novel for a Ditcher.

The old fort of Cutwa, famous for the defeat of the Mahrattas by Ali Verdi, stood on a tongue of land between the Adjai and Bhagirutee. It was a mud fort half a mile in circumference, and had 14 guns mounted upon its walls. But on the approach of Coote in 1757, the garrison set fire to the mat buildings, and absconded. No more vestiges of this fort were seen by us, than some faint traces of the mud walls washed down almost level with the surface of the ground, and overgrown by fine green *kusa* grass.

From Cutwa the celebrated *Plassey* is about sixteen miles higher up. The traveller's enthusiasm is roused to see the famous spot, and go over it—fighting the battle through in his imagination. But the memorable battle-field has ceased to exist—the river having swept it away. Of the famous mango-grove called the Lakha Baug, or the tope of a lac of trees, that was eight hundred yards long and three hundred broad, 'all the trees have died or been swept away by the river, excepting *one*, under which one of the Nabob's generals who fell in the battle is buried.' As long ago as 1801, there were no more than 3000 trees remaining, and a traveller of that date thus writes:—'The river, continually encroaching on its banks in this direction, has at length swept the battle-field away, every trace is obliterated, and a few miserable huts literally overhanging the water, are the only remains of the celebrated Plassey.'

In the large mango-grove was the English army encamped, and where Clive had been lullabied to sleep by the cannon-roar in the midst of the battle. The heavens seemed to have *thrown cold water* upon Suraja Dowlah's hopes, for a heavy shower wetted the powder of his troops, and their matchlocks did not fire. The battle of Plassey made 'Clive a heaven-born general,' and a Nabob-maker. It was got so cheap that he thought all the Asiatics to live in a glass-house, and proposed shortly afterwards to the authorities the conquest of China for paying off the National Debt. In Plassey, it was two Bengalee generals, Meer Muddun (an apostate) and Mohun Lall, who had contested the field with the 'Daring in War,' a circumstance to tickle the vanity of their nation, never wounded so much as when refused to be enlisted as Volunteers. To the chronicler, the battle of Plassey may appear as distinguished by no valorous deed or memorable exploit, but in the importance of its political or moral consequences, its name shall stand on the page of history as equal to those of Marathon, Cannæ, Pharsalia, and Waterloo– the greatest battles in the annals of war.

'The Palasa,' says Sir William Jones, 'is named with honour in the Vedas, in the laws of Menu, and in Sanscrit poems, both sacred and popular; it gave its name to the memorable plain called Plassey by the vulgar, but properly *Palasi*.' Nobody, whom we asked, recollected when a grove of that plant had stood on the spot. Long had the jungly state of the neighbourhood of Plassey been a lurking-place for robbers and dacoits.

It is now a cultivated plain. The spot where the solitary tree yet survives, is called *Pirka Jaiga* and held sacred by the Mussulmans, whose reasons are inexplicable indeed for so doing.

Giving up Plassey, we went up the *Adjai* on a trip through Beerbhoom. The navigation of this stream is very precarious as well as dangerous. Being a mountain-stream, its floods are as impetuous as its drainage is rapid. It is subject to a dangerous bore, called *Hurpa* —a huge wave caused by a sudden fall of rain in the hills, which rushes down the dry bed of the river with a tremendous roar, washing away villages, and drowning men, cattle, and boats in its progress. Fortunately, the torrent came down on the night previous to our starting, and we had a nice agreeable voyage up a river full to the brim.

The Adjai is 'the Amystis of Megasthenes,' and the Ajamati of Wilford. In its literal acceptation, the Adjai means the *unconquerable*, and many a Hindoo mother, like Thetis, formerly dipped their children in its waters to make them invulnerable. Hence may be accounted the name of Beerbhoom, or the land of heroes. It was anciently called *Malla-bhumi*, or the lands of *malls* (wrestlers and athletæ). The legend alludes to a state of things, which is rendered not very probable by the appearance of the present men, who are not distinguished by any superior physical powers and qualifications from the rest of their brethren in Bengal. But there can be no question that the Adjai flows through a country of the highest picturesque beauty. The sur-

face of the ground is beautifully undulated, and dotted with neat and pretty villages. Here, a thick tope of young mangoes spreading their welcome shade, and there, the tall palms overhanging a crystal pond, vary the features of the landscape for a sketcher. The air is delicious and bracing for an invalid. Nothing filthy or noisome to interrupt the pleasures of the eye. The whole country spreads as a vast, bright, and charming park.

Came up to *Bisramtullah*, a sacred spot overshaded by the branches of a hoary banian—with 'daughter' and also grand-daughter trunks. On Choitunya's absconding from home to turn an ascetic, his father had set out in pursuit of him to seize and carry him back. Scarcely had Choitunya shaven his head and assumed the *dundee*, before he heard of his father's arrival at Cutwa. Like a true runaway and scamp, he immediately took to his heels, and, making the fastest use of them, arrived without rest or respite at Bisramtullah. Out of breath, tired and sunburnt, he sat down under the shade of this banian to repose his weary limbs. The spot has thence received the name of Bisramtullah, or resting-place. To appearance, the banian tree looked old and hoary enough to be the identical tree—or it may be, that they preserve a plant to cherish a memory of the spot.

Little below *Soopoor* is seen that the unconquerable has been conquered—for the railway bridge thrown over the Adjai has chained, cribbed, and confined its powers to human will and purposes.

August 29th.—Soopoor is two miles to the west of the station of Bolpoor, and half a mile inland from the Adjai. The elevated *chattaun* upon which it is situated, protects it from the inundation of that stream. Never has it been known to suffer from such a calamity. Tradition states it to have been a town of great repute in the ancient Hindoo times. It was founded by a Rajah Surath, whose memory is cherished in many legends. They show the vestiges of his palace and fortress—if a large pile of *kunkery* rubbish, and nothing else, be entitled to be considered as such. The image of Kali, before which he is said to have offered the sacrifice of a hundred thousand goats, was shown to us in an old decayed temple in the bazar.

There are many brick-houses at Soopoor. The population is large enough. Trade, here, is principally carried on in rice, sugar, and silk. Many Santhals have emigrated and settled in this town, who perform the lowest offices in the community. Our durwan found out a brother of his in the bazar after twenty years, who had been given up for dead by all the members of his families. He had left home in a freak of anger, turned a *sunnyassi*, and, after pilgrimages to various shrines, had taken up his abode in this obscure town. In a day or two there came up another vagabond who had seen *Hinglaz* (near Mekran), *Setbunder*, *Chundernauth*, and many other *tirthas*, and who proved to us an interesting fellow like Mr Duncan's *sunnyassi* in the Asiatic Researches.

Lodging is cheap enough at Soopoor, but not so is

living. The only cheap article here is rice; all others are scarce and dear. Fish is a rare luxury. It does not abound in these mountain-streams, and is never sold without being mixed with sand. The fisher-women say, that they would sooner give up their husbands than the practice of sand-mixing. The numerous tanks with which the country abounds are, therefore, well-stocked with fish. In Western Beerbhoom, nearly all the tanks have reddish water, owing to the ferruginous soil.

September 8th.—Left this morning for Kenduli. Passed through *Soorool*, where we saw the deserted and desolate premises used for the silk filature of the East India Company. Then our path lay through a succession of paddy-fields, waving with the verdant stalks of corn. Now, a bold expansive knoll planted with groves and orchards, and then, a declivity glowing in all the beauty of fresh autumnal verdure, produced the variety of a pleasing alternation, that contrasted much with the tame prospect of a dead level plain in the valley. The Hurpa, or torrent, had but just run down when we came up to the Bukkesur, a little hill-stream, that we crossed in a small canoe hollowed out of the trunk of a palm, while the bearers forded through the stream with the palkee on their heads. Two hours more and we reached *Kenduli*—the birth-place of Joydeva, the great lyric poet of Bengal—we may say, of the world.

Lassen supposes Joydeva to have lived about A.D. 1150. But he was a follower of Ramanund, who

flourished in the beginning of the 15th century. General Cunningham fixes the date of Ramanund in the latter half of the 14th century. He calculates it from the chronology of Pipa-ji, Rajah of Gagrown, and a disciple of Ramanund, who reigned between the years 1360 and 1385. Joydeva is now remembered only as a poet. He is forgotten to have been a reformer. But to genius and scholarship he united other qualifications and virtues which made him revered as the greatest man of his age, and gathered round him disciples from far and near. It has been justly remarked, that 'what Melancthon was to the early Lutheran Church, that was Joydeva to the reformation in Bengal.' Spending half his lifetime in study, travels, and preachings, Joydeva retired to his native spot with the accumulated sanctity of an ancient Rishi, and in his secluded hermitage composed the noble lyric which has surpassed all in the various languages of mankind. The song rose from a small obscure village in Bengal, but all India soon resounded with its melodious echoes. 'Whatever is delightful in the modes of music, whatever is graceful in the fine strains of poetry, whatever is exquisite in the sweet art of love, let the happy and wise learn from the song of Joydeva.'

The great charm of the Gita-Govinda consists in its mellifluous style and exquisite woodland pieces. Milton is said to have 'culled the flowers of his delicious garden of Eden from the soft and sublime scenery of Tuscany; and the charming retreats, in the

neighbourhood of Avernus, were probably the prototypes of Virgil's habitations of the blessed.' Equally the excellence of Joydeva's descriptions—of Radha's beautiful bower, covered with flowering creepers, and darkened by overhanging branches—seems to have been derived from the scenery of the fairy ground amidst which the poet lived. In Beerbhoom the beauties of the land are seldom obscured by the mists and evaporations of the Deltaic regions. The sun shines with a sharp clearness, and the landscape wears a vivid freshness and colouring. The mountains are almost in sight 'robed in their azure hues.' The palmyra rises in tall majesty with its feathery foliage. The mango, the muhuya, and the tamarind thrive with a luxuriant growth. Flocks and herds are numerous. The gushing rills keep up a perpetual music. The gales are zephyrous and bland. In the midst of all these the poet lived and wrote, and they are reflected in his writings.

To render emphatic homage to his genius, it is said that 'the god himself came down to the earth, and, during the absence of the poet for a bath in the Ganges, put the last touches to the Shepherd's song.' The Gita-Govinda has been translated by Sir W. Jones in English, by Lassen in Latin, and by Ruckert into German. But the poem, from first to last, 'consists of a series of exquisite woodland pieces, which Sanscrit poets know so well how to paint, and English writers find impossible worthily to translate. The difference between the natural phenomena of India and Europe

forms an invincible obstacle to the rendering of Sanscrit poetry into the English tongue. The richest and most vigorous metaphors drawn from the scenery peculiar to Asia, and going directly to the Indian heart, are precisely the passages which must be omitted as unintelligible to the English reader. It is as if a translator of Tennyson were compelled to leave out everything that was national and peculiarly English.'

Kenduli is a venerated spot, where the mortal remains of the poet lie interred in a *sumaj*, overshaded by the branches of a splendid grove. To do honour to his memory, each spring the Vaishnavas celebrate the festival of his anniversary. During three days the little sequestered village is thronged by thousands, and its solitude disturbed by strange gaieties. The pilgrims 'sing the reconciliation of Radha with Krishna, but misinterpret the meaning of the shepherd's idyl.'

From Kenduli we pursued our journey to *Doobrajpoor*. The first thing we did on our arrival here was to go and see its little hill. Indeed, it is not even a hillock, but a puny *hill-ling* of pretty appearance though, which pops up its head from a plain of large expanse, and seems, as it were, a little urchin left to itself by its gigantic parents. The height of it is about twenty feet. Huge blocks lie strewed around, barricading every path for ascension to its top. No tree or shrub grows upon it, and its aspect is perfectly bald.

Doobrajpoor is situated almost beneath the shadow of the mountains. More Santhals here. The principal article of trade in Doobrajpoor is sugar, manufactured

from a fine quality of *goor* made by the Santhals, and which is chiefly consumed by the inhabitants of Moorshedabad. Many people deal also in forest produce, formerly brought by the Santhals, but now by the dealers themselves. The region surrounding Doobrajpoor is thinly inhabited, and villages are scattered over it at distant intervals. The greater part of it is uncultivated, and occupied by jungles and saul forests.

September 9th.—To the hot-springs of *Bukkesur*. They are seen in a solitary retired village, to which our passage lay through depths of saul-wood and jungles, and across paddy fields that were like little morasses. As we approached near, the village gradually unfolded itself to the view, rising with its numerous temples and houses like a fairy city of the desert. The spot is lovely and charming with greens of all kinds, and encircled by a beautiful gushing streamlet called the Paphara, or the washer-of-sins.

There is an annual *mela* held on *Sivrath* at Bukkesur, to pay devotions to the god from whom the village has been named. The Pandas are a numerous class, and, owing to the scanty number of pilgrims visiting this remote jungly shrine, the arrival of a new-comer always forms a bone of canine contention to them, till one happens to produce in his worm-eaten scrolls the testimony of some ancestorial signature or certificate, and carries off the visitant, leaving the others to chew the cud of disappointment. Such a thing was not possible for any of them in our case, and raw griffins of pilgrims that we were, our choice was given to the man who bore among

the herd the recommendation of an honest and intelligent physiognomy.

The first thing we were led to see were the *koonds* or springs. There are about eight of them, each being enclosed by little walls of sandstone in the form of wells, and known by different names from those of our gods. The temperature of these springs is unequal, and a fetid sulphureous smell is constantly emitted from them. It is diffused through the atmosphere of the place, and retained by the water long after cooling. The spring that has the highest temperature is the *Soorjakoond*, in which we could not dip our hand, and in which an egg may be boiled, but not rice, of which we threw in a handful to try the experiment. The water is perfectly crystal, and hardly a foot deep, it being allowed to escape through a hole into a nullah communicating with the stream. The bed of the well has a burnt-clayish matter, through which the water constantly oozed in small bubbles. A few paces from the Soorjakoond is a cold spring. There are springs in the bed of the Paphara, the washer-of-sins. But we have not yet alluded to the spring venerated most of all by the Brahmins. It is called the *Setgunga*, part of which is cold, and part lukewarm. This seeming union of contrarieties is what strikes the Brahmins as most marvellous. The water of the Setgunga has a milky whiteness, whence the origin of its name. The *Sahib-logues* of Soory take away the water of these hot-wells for their drink.

Next we went to see the veritable Bukkesur himself. The shrine of his godship stands aloft like Gulliver

amongst a host of Lilliputian temples. Inside the shrine, it is uninteresting as a sepulchre. The emblem is placed in a low subterranean chamber, where a feeble light burns day and night, contending with a profound darkness.

It was nearly four in the afternoon when we left Bukkesur for *Soory*, and tracked our way through a deep forest of saul. Tall bristling trees closed the view on all sides, and not a trace of human abode was found in their wild, forlorn depths. These saul plantations are valuable estates to their owners, who cherish them with great care for their timber. On emerging from the forest, which extends for ten miles, we fell into a broad, macadamized road leading right up to Soory. In Beerbhoom, especially over the elevated knolls, the hard, red, kunkurry soil enables to dispense with all metalling of the roads.

September 10*th*.—Soory is a modern town, with many brick buildings, and a principal street in the middle. The ancient capital of the province was Naghore, to which there was a grand causeway from Gour for communication at all seasons of the year. The environs of Soory—bold and beautiful. The prospects commanded are closed by blue, rugged hills in the horizon. Their 'sweet mountain air' is sniffed from this distance, and recommends the place to the man in search of health.

Proceeded from Soory down to *Poorunderpore*, which appeared to be a decayed village from its former prosperity, and where we met with an old, decrepit, poor dame, who, to our asking about her age, gave the fol-

lowing quaint reply,—that 'she was about ten years old when rice sold three seers to a rupee.' It was the year of that 'great famine which swept away one-fifth of the population of Bengal,' in which John Shore wrote home to his wife 'that he was buying crowds of little children, at five rupees a-piece, to save them from being abandoned to the jackals;' in which 'the whole valley of the Ganges was filled with misery and death, and the Hooghly every day rolled thousands of corpses close to the porticoes and gardens of their English conquerors'—the year 1770. In 1846, the old woman was in her eighty-sixth year, which an ignorant creature of her circumstances not being likely to recollect, was counted by her from the year of the great famine, the most memorable event in her life, and indelibly impressed on her memory.

November 12th, 1858.—It was not till twelve years from the last date, that an opportunity occurred to visit Beerbhoom again, and we shift the scene from Porundpore to *Cynthia*, to carry the reader to Moorshedabad. To the north-west of Cynthia lay the regions then recently famous for the exploits of Sedhoo Manjhee, Singra, Pachoo, and Sookool—the Alexanders and Napoleons of the Santhals. Few events have that great singularity of interest as the Santhal project of the conquest of India in 1855—which was intended to have been made with bows and arrows against all the mighty instruments of war of the nineteenth century—which threatened alike all Hindoos, Mussulmans, and English to be routed from the land as trespassers and usurpers

—and which would have turned the saloon of the Government House into a splendid hog-stye, and its Council Room into a dove-cot.

Cynthia is finely situated in a charming region, watered by the Mourukhee. But Eastern Beerbhoom has a different physical conformation from that of Western Beerbhoom, and has gradually assumed the flat level character of the valley, partaking as much in the nature of its soil as its climate. This is the *Raur Proper*, the inhabitants of which boast of a purer descent, and look down with scorn upon the people on the other side of the Bhagiruttee. Nothing afforded us so great a pleasure as to pass through a country of one wide and uninterrupted cultivation, in which paddy fields, that have justly made our country to be called *the granary of the world*, extended for miles in every direction. No such prospect greeted the eyes of a traveller in 1758. Then the annual inroads of the Mahrattas, the troubles following the overthrow of the Mahomedan dynasty, frequent and severe famines, and virulent pestilences, had thinned the population, and reduced fertile districts to wastes and jungles. It is on record, that, previous to 1793—the year of the Permanent Settlement—one third of Lower Bengal lay waste and uncultivated. These lands yielded no rent, and the State made over its interest in them in perpetuity to its subjects. Never, perhaps, has Bengal enjoyed such a long period of peace without interruption as under British rule. From the day of the battle of Plassey no enemy has left a foot-print upon her soil, no peasant

has lost a sheaf of grain, and no man a single drop of blood. Under security against an enemy from abroad, population has increased, cultivation has been extended, the country has become a great garden, and landed property has risen in value 'more than forty-fold in one province, nineteen-fold in another, and more than ten-fold throughout all Lower Bengal.'

Paddy is the great cultivation in Beerbhoom, and next to it the mulberry, of which the gardens are innumerable—dotting the country in patches of a dark green colour. The black soil of these tracts is the best adapted for mulberry. It cannot be ascertained now whether this plant is indigenous, or was introduced like tea at a remote period from China. Bengal grows silk, but Benares makes the richest brocades. It was under the Empress Noor Jehan, who first lived in Burdwan, that silk fabrics became the fashion at the Mogul Court. The late East India Company introduced the Italian mode of winding silk, and the natives at once dropped their own method. In 1757, they sent out some Italians, and a Mr Wilder, who was well acquainted with the silk manufacture, to introduce the improvements. 'Napoleon's Berlin decrees, prohibiting the exportation of silk from Italy to England, gave a great stimulus to the cultivation of the silk trade in Bengal: a meeting was immediately held in London, and a request was made to the East India Company to supply England with silk direct from India.'

Reached *Jammo-Kundee*, the native village of Gunga Govind Sing—the Dewan of Warren Hastings, and the

great-grandfather of the Paikparah Rajahs. He retired with an immense fortune, and devoted a great part of it to the erection of shrines and images of Krishna. His name has acquired a traditional celebrity for the most magnificent *shrad* ever performed in Bengal. The *tanks* of oil and ghee dug on the occasion are yet existing. There were the Rajahs and Zemindars of half Bengal, and the guests being presided over by the Brahmin Rajah *Siva Chunder* of Krishnugger, the pomp of the *shrad* was magnified to be greater than that of *Dakhya's Yugiya*, in which there was no *Siva*. In that shrad, the Brahmins are said to have been fed with the fresh *pershaud* (food) of Juggernauth, brought by relays of pc s laid from Pooree to Kundee.

Of all the shrines, the one at Kundee is maintained with the greatest liberality. The god here seems to live in the style of the Great Mogul. His musnud and pillows are of the best velvet and damask richly embroidered. Before him are placed gold and silver salvers, cups, tumblers, pawn-dans, and jugs all of various size and pattern. He is fed every morning with fifty kinds of curries, and ten kinds of pudding. His breakfast over, gold *hookas* are brought to him to smoke the most aromatic tobacco. He then retires to his noonday *siesta*. In the afternoon he tiffs and lunches, and at night sups upon the choicest and richest viands with new names in the vocabulary of Hindoo confectionery. The daily expense at this shrine is said to be 500 rupees, inclusive of alms and charity to the poor.

In Kundee the *Ras-jatra* was at its height, and illuminations, fire-works, nautches, songs, and frolics were the order of the day, and followed upon each other's kibe. The *Ras-Mandala* was a miniature of the Hindoo Pantheon. It was interesting to see there the representations of the principal characters of the Ramayana and Mahabarat, in well-executed life-sized figures. There was Rama breaking the bow in the court of Janaka. There was Arjoona trying his archery to carry off Dropodee. The Rishis and Pundits of Judishthira's *subha* had very expressive features. The greatest attraction of all was possessed by the fine figures and faces of the Gopinees. More than twenty-five thousand people were gathered at the mela, and the sum of ten thousand rupees was expended by the Rajahs to celebrate the festival.

From Kundee to *Berhampore*—a distance of sixteen miles, through a flat, level country that did not appear to be thickly populated, and had a bad repute for robberies and murders.

Berhampore has risen under the auspices of the English. Many stately edifices adorn the town, and the military quarters, with an excellent parade-ground, form the most striking features of the place. In 1763, Berhampore was the utmost northern station. Golam Hussein, the author of the Seir Mutakherin, writing in 1786, states, 'the barracks of Berhampore are the finest and healthiest any nation can boast of; there are two regiments of Europeans, seven or eight of Sepahis, and fifteen or sixteen cannons placed there, and yet I heard

men say that the Mussulmans were so numerous at Moorshedabad, that with *brick-bats* in their hands they could knock the English down.'

The extent and crowded state of the burial-ground at Berhampore furnish the best comment upon its unhealthy situation. In that ground lies George Thomas, a son of Erin, who stepped into the shoes of Sumroo, and, from a *pro tempore* husband to his Begum, rose to be the Irish Rajah of Hurrianah. By one set of adventures he had attained sovereignty—by another his musnud was turned topsy-turvy. Collecting the wreck of his fortune, the ex-Rajah was proceeding down to Calcutta in 1802 with a view to retire to his native Tipperary, when he died on the way at Berhampore—solemnly bequeathing his conquests and territories to his liege lord, George the Third! It is said, that the adventures of this curious man gave the basis to Sir Walter Scott upon which to build his East Indian story of the 'Surgeon's Daughter.'

'Mrs. Sherwood lived to the east of the burial-ground, and "Little Henry," the subject of her beautiful tale, "Little Henry and his bearer," is also buried here.' In the beginning of the present century, Berhampore was the residence of General Stewart. He 'used to offer poojah to idols and worship the Ganges. He lived to an advanced age, and was well acquainted with the manners of the natives. His Museum in Chowringhee was opened to the public; during the last years of his life he fed a hundred destitute beggars daily: he was called "Hindoo Stewart." Like Job

Charnock he married a Hindoo, and she made a Hindoo of him.'

It was at Berhampore that the Sepoy Mutiny first sounded its note of alarm. 'On the 26th of February, 1857, the Nineteenth Bengal Native Infantry, quartered at this station, being directed to parade for exercise with blank ammunition, refused to obey the command, and in the course of the following night turned out with a great noise of drumming and shouting, broke open the bells of arms, and committed other acts of open mutiny. By order of the Governor-General, the regiment was disarmed, marched down to Barrackpore, and there disbanded and sent about their business.'

Kasimbazar, the great silk mart of Bengal, is now three miles from the river, and a wilderness. The Dutch, the French, and the English, all had factories here in the last century. The filature and machinery of the East India Company were worth about twenty lacs. In 1677, Mr Marshal, employed in the factory at Kasimbazar, was the first Englishman who learnt Sanscrit, and translated the Sree Bhagbut into English, the manuscript of which is preserved in the British Museum. Job Charnock was chief here in 1681. There occurred here a very remarkable instance of Suttee witnessed by Mr Holwell in 1742, when Sir F. Russell was chief at Kasimbazar. The woman was the relict of a respectable Mahratta. 'Her friends, the merchants, and Lady Russel, did all they could to dissuade her: but to show her contempt of pain, she put her

finger in the fire and held it there a considerable time, she then with one hand put fire in the palm of the other, sprinkled incense on it and fumigated the Brahmins, and as soon as permission to burn arrived from Hosseyn Shah, Fouzdar of Moorshedabad, she mounted the pyre with a firm step.' The great Governor-General, Warren Hastings, was in 1753 a commercial assistant at Kasimbazar, where he devoted much of his time to the study of Persian and Arabic.

Moorshedabad, originally called Mooksoodabad, is said by Tieffenthaler to have been founded by Akbér. Though not spoken of in the Ayeen Akberry, the fact does not seem to be improbable. The central position, and its local advantages, may have recommended the spot to the notice of that far-seeing emperor to lay the foundations of its future greatness. Mooksoodabad remained a small place, but on the removal of the seat of Government by Moorshud Cooly Khan in 1704, when its name was changed into Moorshedabad, and when that Governor erected a palace and other public offices, and established the mint, the town rapidly grew in size and importance, rose to be the first place in Bengal, and attracted all eyes as the source of favour, and the centre of wealth and splendour. Including Kasimbazar, Saidabad, Mooteejheel, Jeagunge, and Bhogwangola, it acquired a circumference of thirty miles, and eclipsed Dacca and Rajmahal in their most palmy days.

Of Moorshedabad Proper, the highest size was 5 miles long and 2¼ miles broad. This was in 1759, only two years after the battle of Plassey, when it had already at-

tained its greatest magnitude. To speak of its greatness and opulence in the words of Clive:—'The city of Moorshedabad is as extensive, populous, and rich as the city of London, with this difference, that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than in the last city.' The population was so swarming, that when Clive entered Moorshedabad at the head of 200 Europeans and 500 Sepoys, he remarked, 'the inhabitants, if inclined to destroy the Europeans, might have done it *with sticks and stones*.' There was then 'at the entrance to the town a large and magnificent gateway, and a parapet pierced with embrasures for cannon,' probably erected with other fortifications by Ali Verdi in 1742, when the Mahrattas had spread their inroads up to the suburbs of Moorshedabad, and when the English obtained permission to build 'a brick wall round their factory at Kasimbazar, with bastions at the angles.'

Up to 1770, Moorshedabad is described by Tieffenthaler as having 'an immense number of brick stucco houses, adorned with a great number of gardens and fine buildings, and that the Ganges there had an astonishing number of barks and boats on it.' In 1808, Mr Ward thus writes of it: 'Moorshedabad is full of Moors, very populous, very dusty, except a few large houses and a few mosques, the rest of the town consists of small brick houses or huts into which an European creeps: for two miles the river was lined with trading vessels.' It seems that Mr Ward took Moorshedabad to be a place of the *Moors*, and states it to have been full of those people.

The fall of the Mussulman dynasty was the first cause of the decay of Moorshedabad. The change of the course of the Ganges, which, deserting Kasimbazar, Mooteejheel, and Kalkapur, ruined the trade of those places, and turned them into 'impervious jungles denying entrance to all but tigers,' forms the second. The third cause must be traced to the dreadful havoc made by the famine of 1770, when 'desolation spread through the provinces: multitudes fled to Moorshedabad; 7000 people were fed there daily for several months; but the mortality increased so fast that it became necessary to keep a set of persons constantly employed in removing the dead from the streets and roads. At length those persons died, and for a time, dogs, jackals, and vultures were the only scavengers. The dead were placed on rafts and floated down the river, the bearers died from the effluvia, whole villages expired, even children in some parts fed on their dead parents, the mother on her child. Travellers were found dead with money-bags in their hands, as they could not purchase corn with them.' The mortality was so great at Moorshedabad that whole quarters were left haunted, and sojourners returning to their homes found none of their relatives or friends to be living,—and they gave birth to tales of vampires and goblins that yet amuse children in native nurseries.

The fourth cause must be assigned to the removal of the capital, the Revenue Board, and the *Adaulats* to Calcutta in 1772. 'The reason of the removal was—that appeals were thus made to Calcutta direct, and only one

establishment kept up; the records and treasure were insecure in Moorshedabad, which a few dacoits might enter and plunder with ease. Hastings also assigned a reason that thereby Calcutta would be increased in wealth and inhabitants, which would cause an increase of English manufactures, and give the natives a better knowledge of English customs.' The abolition of the *Punya* may be taken into the account as another cause. 'The Punya was the annual settlement of Bengal, when the principal Zemindars and all the chief people of the country assembled at Moorshedabad in April and May: it was abolished in 1772, because it was found that the amils or contractors rack-rented. The Zemindars used to come to the Punya with the state of omrahs, it was viewed as an act of fealty or homage to the Nabob of Moorshedabad, and the annual rent-roll of the provinces was then settled. Khelats were distributed each year: in 1767 the Khelat disbursement amounted to 46,750 Rs. for Clive and his Council; 38,000 Rs. for the Nizamut; 22,634 Rs. for the people of the treasury; 7,352 Rs. to the Zemindar of Nuddea; to the Rajah of Beerbhoom 1,200 Rs.; of Bishenpore 734 Rs.: the sum expended on Khelats that year amounted to 2,16,870 Rs. The practice of distributing these Khelats was of long standing, as they were given to the Zemindars on renewal of their sunnuds, and as a confirmation of their appointment; to the officers of the Nizamut they were an honorary distinction. The people held the Punya in great esteem, and Clive, regarding it as an ancient institution, raised a special revenue col-

lection to pay the expenses of it; but in 1769 the Court of Directors prohibited the giving presents at the Punya. In 1767, at the Punya, the Nabob was seated on the musnud, Verelst, the Governor-General, was on his right, and recommended in the strongest manner to all the ministers and land-holders to give all possible encouragement to the clearing and cultivating of lands for the mulberry. It must have been a splendid sight, when, amid all the pomp of Oriental magnificence, Khelats were presented to the Rajahs or Nabobs of Dacca, Dinajpoor, Hooghly, Purneah, Tippera, Sylhet, Rungpore, Beerbhoom, Bishenpore, Pachete, Rajmahal, and Bhagulpore.' The ceremony of the Punya was abolished, but the Zemindars yet keep it up in their Cutcheries, as a custom honoured in the observance and not in the breach. The annual settlement gave way to the decennial settlement, till, at last, the great landlord of the soil—the State, chose to accept a rent in perpetuity, and introduced the grand fiscal measure of the Permanent Settlement.

Few vestiges of ancient Moorshedabad are seen at this day. The lovely *Mootee Jheel*, or Pearl Lake, is now a desert. Of the stately palace built by Suraja-u-Dowla, of black marble brought from the ruins of Gour, only a few arches now remain. It was here that Clive, like the ancient Earl of Warwick—the maker and unmaker of kings—took Meer Jeffier by the hand, led him up the hall, and seated him upon the musnud, proclaiming him to be the Nabob of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and completing the ceremony in Oriental fashion by a

nuzzer of gold rupees on a golden platter. Here, too, was that rich and glittering treasury, of which 'the vaults were piled with heaps of gold and silver to the right and left, and these crowned with rubies and diamonds,' as actually found by Clive, when he made his first entry, victorious from the battle-field, and where he was at liberty to help himself, but about which, many years afterwards, when he had to defend his conduct, he declared, 'By God, Mr Chairman, at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation.' There was in that treasury two crores of rupees in ready coin, and the payment of the first instalment is thus described:—'The money was packed in 700 chests, embarked in 100 boats, which proceeded down the river in procession under the care of soldiers to Nuddea, whence they were escorted to Fort William by all the boats of the English squadron, with banners flying and music sounding—a scene of triumph and joy, and a remarkable contrast to the scene of the preceding year, when Suraja-u-Dowla had ascended the same stream triumphant from the conquest and plunder of Calcutta.'

The *Kuttera*, described by Hodges in 1780, as 'a grand seminary of Mussulman learning, 70 feet square, adorned by a mosque which rises high above all the surrounding buildings,' is now all in ruins. Near it was the *Topekhana*, or the Nabob's artillery. Moorshud Cooly Khan, who made defaulting Zemindars wear loose trowsers, and then introduced live cats into them, lies buried here as the humblest of beings at the foot of the stairs leading up to the musjeed, so as to be trampled on

by people going up. Here is an edifying tale of his humility. 'Jaffer Khan, sometimes also called Moorshud Cooly Khan, having a presentiment that his death was approaching, commissioned Mirad, the son of Ismail, a *Furrash* (a servant whose business it is to spread carpets), to erect a tomb, a *musjeed*, and *kuthrub* to be called after him, and directed that it should be completed in six months. This man, on receiving the commission, requested that he should not be called to account for any acts that he might think necessary to adopt in the execution of his work. On his request being granted, he immediately called upon the Zemindars to supply him with artisans and labourers to raise the building. He fixed for the site a piece of ground which belonged to the Nabob to the east of the city. For the materials for the work he pulled down all the Hindoo temples that he heard of in or near the city, and seized all the boats in the river. The Hindoo Zemindars wished to preserve their temples, and offered to furnish all the materials at their own cost, but this Mirad refused, and it is said that not a Hindoo temple was left standing within four or five days' journey round the city. He also exercised oppression in other ways, and even pressed respectable Hindoos while travelling in their suwarees (palkees) to work at the building. By this means the work was finished in twelve months. It consisted of a Kuthrub, a Musjeed, and Minars, a Houir and Baoli and Well—and Jaffer Khan endowed it in such a manner as to insure its being preserved after his death.'

In the neighbourhood of the Mootee Jheel 'once

lived Lord Teignmouth, who devoted his days to civil business, and his evenings to solitude, studying Oordoo, Persian, Arabic, and Bengali: after dinner, when reposing, an intelligent native used to entertain him with stories in Oordoo. He carried on an extensive intercourse with the natives, and superintended a small farm: he writes of it, "here I enjoy cooing doves, whistling blackbirds, and purling streams; I am quite solitary, and, except once a week, see no one of Christian complexion."'

Moorshedabad formerly extended over a great part of the western bank. Du Perron describes the river as dividing the city into two parts. On the right bank is the burial-ground of the Nabobs. The good Ali Verdi lies buried here in the garden of Khoos Baug. Near him lies his pet—Suraja-a-Dowla, who ripped open pregnant women to see how the child lay in the womb; who ordered to fill boats with men and drown them, while he sat in his palace to enjoy the sight of their dying struggles; who bricked up alive one of his mistresses between four walls; who revenged the adulteries of his mother by violating the chastity of every woman; who kept in his seraglio a female guard composed of Tartar, Georgian, and Abyssinian women, armed with sabres and targets; and who murdered persons in open day in the streets of Moorshedabad—forming the most perfect specimen of a Mahomedan character and follower of the Prophet, particularly as regards his two great tenets of making slaughter a virtue, and indulging in a plurality of wives, and an *ad libitum* number of con-

cubines. Forster, in 1781, mentions 'that *mullahs* were employed here to offer prayers for the dead, and that the widow of Suraja-a-Dowla used often to come to the tomb, and perform certain ceremonies of mourning in memory of her deceased husband.' The marriage of Suraja-a-Dowla was one of the most magnificent on record. It was celebrated by Ali Verdi, who 'kept a continued feasting for a month in his palace at Moorshedabad: all comers were welcome, every family in the city, rich and poor, partook of his hospitality, by receiving several times tables of dressed victuals called *turahs*, none of which cost less than 25 Rs., and thousands of them were distributed in Moorshedabad.'

On the right bank of the river was the palace of Meer Jaffier, whom his contemporaries styled 'Clive's ass.' It was fortified with cannon, and large enough 'to accommodate three European monarchs.'

To give an item of the ancient trade of Moorshedabad: 'the Pachautra, or Custom Office books, state that, as late as Ali Verdi's time, £75,000 worth of raw silk were entered there, exclusive of the European investments, which were not entered there, as being either duty free or paying duty at Hooghly.' None of the ancient families exist now—'the greater part of the nobles have gone to Delhi or have returned to Persia.' No Mussulman here now possesses a tenth part of the wealth of Khojah Wazeed, whose daily expense was one thousand rupees. The famous *Setts*, of whom Burke remarked in the House of Commons 'that their transactions were as extensive as those of the Bank of Eng-

land,' and of whom the natives say that they proposed to block up the passage of the Bhagiruttee with *rupees*, are now reduced to the greatest poverty. One of their descendants still lives, and occupies the ancient ancestorial residence, which is in a very dilapidated state. He subsisted for many years by the sale of the family jewels, till, at last, the British government granted him a monthly pension of 1,200 Rs. His ancestors are reputed to have possessed ten crores of rupees. The title of *Jagat Sett*, or the Banker of the World, was conferred upon the family by the emperor of Delhi. However reduced in circumstances now, the descendant of the Setts still has his musnud on the left in the Durbar of the Nabob Nazim.

In Moorshedabad, the chief object to attract the traveller now is the *New Palace*. This is a splendid edifice, planned and executed by Colonel Macleod. He was the only European, the rest having been all natives, engaged in the work. The building is 425 feet long, 200 wide, and 80 high—being the noblest in all Bengal. The cost is twenty lacs. Architectural men describe the Government House as a building pulled by four elephants, from the four corners, and give the palm to the Palace of Moorshedabad. The staircase is as grand as that which leads a man to the levees and durbars of the Viceroy. The marble floors are splendid. Nothing can be more sumptuous than the great banquetting-hall which is 290 feet long, with sliding doors encased in mirrors. The different rooms are adorned in different styles. In the centre of the building is a dome,

from which hangs a vast and most superb chandelier with 150 branches, presented to the Nabob by the Queen. Here lay a beautiful ivory seat, very nicely painted and gilt in flowers, which was said to be the throne of the Nabob. It was not old Luchmunya's seat that a Hindoo should have felt any reverence for it; rather it called to mind the dark deeds of tyrants and profligates that were monsters in the human shape. The throne was a specimen of the perfection of that carved ivory work for which Moorshedabad is famous. Besides mirrors, chandeliers, and lanterns, which soon begin to cloy, there are no other decorations than a few portraits of the Nabob, his sons and ancestors. The latter does not extend beyond two or three generations.

From a balcony was shown to us the Zenana. Remembering how *Hakeems* and *Coberajes* even were not allowed to pass its threshold, and who prescribed medicine for the Begums by merely examining the urine, it was on our part an act of the highest espionage to overlook the Zenana. Inside the pale of the *Killa*, or enclosure, within which the buildings stand, the will of the Nazim is yet law. Civil authorities have no jurisdiction there, and we thought our audacity might cost our heads. From a hasty glance that we had of the Zenana we observed it to be a range of one-storied buildings in a circular form, with an open plot of ground in the middle, laid out in little gardens and flower-beds. There were 30 ladies in the harem we were told, and about 50 eunuchs to guard them. These eunuchs 'come from different places in Abyssinia, from

Tigra, Dancali, Nubia, and the Galla country.' The former Nabobs had much larger harems. That of Serefraz had 1500 women. It was Ali Verdi only who had been content with a single wife. Suraja-a-Dowla's profligacies had no bounds. His favourite mistress, 'Mohun Lall's sister, was a lady of the most delicate form, and weighed only 64 lbs. English.' Many of Suraja-a-Dowla's women taken in the camp had been offered to Clive by Meer Jaffier immediately after the battle of Plassey. The *Seir Mutakherin* describes the court of Moorshedabad as 'a kind of Sodom; the women of the court talked *publicly* of subjects which should never pass the door of the lips.'

From the Palace to the *Emambarah*, which is a great arcaded enclosure considerably larger than that of Hooghly. Of course, when fitted up with mirrors which reflect the light from numerous lustres, lamps, chandeliers, and girandoles, the place forms a scene of the most glittering splendour.

Off, on the other shore, lay some of the *punkhees*, or peacock and horse modelled yachts and pleasure-boats of the Nabob, which give to one a faint idea of those pleasure-boats of the Timurian princes upon which were 'floating markets' and flower-gardens.' No other craft chequered the surface of the river. The days are gone when the Ganges below Moorshedabad exhibited a brilliantly lighted-up scene, and bore onward upon its bosom 'floating palaces, towers, gates, and pagodas, bright with a thousand colours, and shining in the light of numberless glittering cressets.'

The festival of the *Beira* is said to have been introduced by Suraja-a-Dowla. It is an annual Mahomedan fête 'instituted in honour of the escape of an ancient sovereign of Bengal from drowning; who, as the tradition relates, being upset in a boat at night, would have perished, his attendants being unable to distinguish the spot where he struggled in the water, had it not been for a sudden illumination caused by a troop of beauteous maidens, who had simultaneously launched into the water a great number of little boats, formed of cocoa-nuts, garlanded with flowers, and gleaming with a lamp, whose flickering flame each viewed with anxious hopes of a happy augury. The followers of the king, aided by this seasonable diffusion of light, perceived their master just as he was nearly sinking, exhausted by vain efforts to reach the shore, and guiding a boat to his assistance, arrived in time to snatch him from a watery grave.'

The stables, the stud of elephants, the hunting establishments of the Nabob, are all yet on a princely scale. He wears every day a new suit of clothing, which become 'cast-off finery' on the following morning. If the physician prescribes a *bel-fruit* for the regulation of his bowels, the price of it must be mentioned to be a couple of rupees, or it would not be touched by his Highness. But the dominion that extended throughout Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, is now bound within the nutshell of a little *killa*, not half a mile in circumference. He has to wear no more *slippers worth* 50,000 *Rs.* He gets not now to chew such rich

bitels, as the spit would kill a sweeper. 'There can be no doubt that the same end awaits the close of the title of Nabob Nazim of Bengal, which, without any exceptional reason in its favour, has so long been permitted to survive its congener, the Nabobate of the Carnatic. The endeavour to maintain a stilted position on the strength of ancestral offices, is a pretension which under a Mahomedan rule would long since have collapsed; attendance at the Royal levees in refulgent kinkhaub, and a discreet use of shawl presents, will not long stave off the inevitable oblivion; and it has been due to the ignorance as much as to the pseudo-tenderness of British sentiment that the vitality of such empty phantoms of departed greatness has been somewhat unreasonably protracted. The error was a venial one, though if anything similar had been attempted in behalf of those whose names had been prominent in England's history, ridicule and mockery would have trampled such pretensions to the dust. The time has, however, arrived when the descendants of the families of the Nabob of the Carnatic, of the Nabob Nazim, of Tippoo, and of the King of Oudh cannot too early realize the necessity of accepting a position in Native Society analogous to that occupied by the noblemen of England with respect to its commoners. They cannot hope for a higher or more honourable one; the framework of society and of our administration does not allow of their holding any other; and it will, when fairly accepted, enable them to train and educate their sons in a manner which would fit them for employment

and render them useful instead of useless and isolated members of society. There is small hope of so desirable a change as long as baseless pretensions are nourished.'

Old *Bhogwangola* is now twelve miles from new Bhogwangola. The former was the port of Moorshedabad in Ali Verdi's time, when it stood upon the Bhagiruttee, now flowing some five miles westward. In old Bhogwangola are remains that testify to its having been 'a very extensive town or a series of large villages, now overgrown with forests, and dotted with numerous tanks and other signs of population.' New Bhogwangola is a great corn-fair, in which, says Bishop Heber, 'the small but neat mat-houses are scattered over a large green common, fenced off from the river by a high grassy mound, which forms an excellent dry walk, bordered with mango-trees, bamboos, and the date-palm, as well as some fine banians. The common was covered with children and cattle, a considerable number of boats was on the beach, different musical instruments were strumming, thumping, squealing, and rattling from some of the open sheds, and the whole place exhibited a cheerfulness, and an activity and bustle, which were extremely interesting and pleasing.' But a second time has the Ganges played its freaks with Bhogwangola, and devoured a great portion of it that is spoken of by Heber.

Nearly forty miles above Moorshedabad is *Jungipore*, said to have been named after the emperor Jehangeer. It stands on the eastern bank, and was formerly noted

for its largest silk filature. Lord Valentia, in 1802, describes the place 'as the greatest silk station of the East India Company, and employing 3000 persons.' The Charter of 1833 doomed Jungipore and all other silk and cotton ports of Bengal to decay, and the place is now a toll-station, by which about 50,000 boats annually pass, paying a tax on average of 3 Rs. for each boat.

Twenty-one miles again from Jungipore is *Sooty*, where the Bhagirattee has branched off from the Ganges. The neighbourhood of Sooty is remarkable for the battle of Gheriah, fought between Ali Verdi and Serefraz Khan in 1740. There was another battle fought in 1763 between Meer Cossim and the English. The mouth at Sooty appears to have seldom had a free, navigable stream. Tavernier, writing in 1665, mentions that 'there was a sand-bank before Sooty, which rendered it impassable in January, so that Bernier was obliged to travel by land from Rajmahal to Hooghly.' It seems to have had an open passage at the time of Suraja-a-Dowla, who, 'alarmed at the capture of Chandernagore, and afraid that the English would bring their ships up the Padma and into the Bhagirattee, sunk vessels near Sooty' to provide against such a contingency.

Passing Sooty, the voyager falls into the waters of the Great Ganges, that, rolling on for a thousand of miles in one unbroken current, has here first turned its course to flow with the swelled tribute of a hundred streams into the great reservoir of the sea.

'Vast as a sea the Ganges flows,
And fed by Himalaya's snows,
Or rushing rains, with giant force
Unwearied runs its fated course.'

The low marshy country, extending from Rajmahal to Nuddea, and measuring a distance of 100 miles, is where tradition points out the former bed of the Ganges before the formation of the Pudma, and before also the existence of the present Bhagiruttee. It is inscrutable now to understand the legend of Bhagiruth having brought the Ganges, but, doubtless, it refers to some natural phenomenon which probably occurred in the reign of that Hindoo prince, and on which scientific researches may throw some light on a future day.

The ruins of Gour.—No one sailing up from Sooty, and passing so near the spot, should omit to see the ancient, the historic, and the most interesting of all places in Bengal—Gour, which stands upon the opposite bank, and is but half a day's journey. Desolate as it now is, it is invested with the associations of a thousand years—with reminiscences of the *Pala* and *Sena* Rajahs, and of Mussulman princes till near the end of the sixteenth century. The city of Deva Pala and Mahindra Pala, of Adisura and Bullala Sena, offers a fair field for archæological investigation. No very ancient remains are said to exist there, but this is an assertion made, we think, without proper and sufficient inquiries.

Much uncertainty exists as to the origin of Gour. In the opinion of Rennel, 'Gour, called also Lucknouti, the ancient capital of Bengal, and supposed to be the *Gangia regia* of Ptolemy, stood on the left bank of the

Ganges, about twenty miles below Rajmahal. It was the capital of Bengal 730 years before Christ, and was repaired and beautified by Hoomayoon, who gave it the name of Jennuteabad; which name a part of the Circar, in which it was situated, still bears.' No doubt, the antiquity of Gour stretches back many a century, but it cannot be believed to extend to so remote a period as the eighth century before Christ. Buddha would then have most likely visited it on his way to Kooch Vihar, and the fact would have been mentioned in Buddhistical writings. The Mahabarat does not speak of it as having been seen by the Pandava brothers in their peregrinations. The Puranas speak of Bengal under the name of *Bungo*, and not of Gour, by which it was subsequently called. Ptolemy's *Gangia regia* must refer to some other place, and not to Gour. Fa Hian visited India in the beginning of the fifth, and Hwen Thsang in the early part of the seventh century, and they do not speak of Gour. The date assigned by Wilford—A.D. 648, seems to be the most probable period when Gour was founded, on the independence of Bengal from the dominion of Magadha. Bengal, called by Akber, the *paradise of countries*, appears to have first had its own sovereigns on the fall of the Andra dynasty in the middle of the seventh century. True, that the Mahabarat speaks of a king of Bengal, but he went to the Great War as an ally of the king of Magadha. It was not till the time specified by Wilford that Bengal had its independent kings, and Gour became the capital of those kings.

If copper tablets and stone columns do not perpetuate falsehoods, it is now more than a thousand years past, since from the capital of 'the richest province of India with the most pusillanimous Hindoo population,' that warriors issued forth and war-boats sailed up the Ganges, to bring Kamrupa on the east, and Camboja on the west, and Kalinga on the south, to acknowledge the supremacy of its sovereigns. It is doubtful whether any vestiges of this most glorious period in the history of the Bengalees can now be found in Gour. From an inscription upon a temple of Buddha in Benares, it is seen that a Pala Rajah was reigning in Bengal in the year 1026. The overthrow of that dynasty by the Senas, the conquest of Benares by the Rahtores, the destruction of Sarnath, and the ascendancy of Shaivaism, are all events that seem to have occurred within a few years of each other. Probably Adisura established himself on the throne of Gour about the same time that Anangpal II. retired to and re-built the capital of Delhi. Kannouge had been abandoned by the Tomaras for Barri, and did not flourish again under the Rahtores till about the year 1050. It must have been subsequent to this period, that Adisura, finding no worthy Brahmins among the illiterate and heretic *Barendros* of Buddhistical Bengal to celebrate his *Yagiya*, had sent to invite five orthodox Brahmins from Kannouge. Bullala Sena, commonly supposed to be his son, but really his great-great-grandson,* is found on reliable authority to have been reigning in 1097. The son and successor of Bullala was

* 'The Sena Rajahs of Bengal,' by Baboo Rajendro Lall Mitter.

Luchmun Sena, who is said by the Mahomedan historians to have 'greatly embellished the city of Gour, and called it after his own name Lucknouty, or Luchmana-vati.' His grandson Luchmuniya, however, held his court at Nuddea, whence he was driven by Buktiyar Khilligy, under whom Gour once more became the capital of Mahomedan sovereignty in Bengal.

Of Hindoo Gour, probably no more traces exist than in the *Hindoo Figures and Inscriptions* found in the ruins of mosques built with the materials of Hindoo temples destroyed to assert the superiority of Islam. Forty years after it had fallen into the hands of the Mahomedans, Minajudden Jowzani, author of the *Tab-kat-i-Nasiri*, writing on the spot, has left this on record:— 'The writer of this work arrived at Lucknowty in the year 641, and visited all the religious buildings erected by the prince Hissam Addeen Avuz. Lucknowty consists of two wings, one on each side of the Ganges: the western side is called Dal, and the city of Lucknowty is on that side. From Lucknowty to Naghore (in Beerbhoom), and on the other side to Deocote, a mound or causeway is formed the distance of ten days' journey, which in the rainy season prevents the water from overflowing the lands: and if this mound did not exist, there would be no other mode of travelling nor of visiting the edifices in the neighbourhood but in boats. Since his time, in consequence of the construction of the causeway, the road is open to everybody.'

Under the Patans, Gour had attained the size of 'twenty miles in circumference,' and was inclosed by 'a

wall sixty feet high.' It had 'two millions of inhabitants,' and was the populous capital of the most populous province in the empire. The streets were 'wide enough,' but 'the people were so numerous that they were sometimes trodden to death.' They had certainly no street like the Chowringhee, and in ancient Gour there were no other wheeled carriages to run over a man than the *ekka*, the accidents on the road therefore must have been owing to a bad police. But the opulence of the people seems to have exceeded that of the nobility of modern Calcutta. The rich of Gour are said to have been 'used to eat their food from golden plates,' which are not yet seen on the tables of any European or native. The city was adorned with many stately mosques, colleges, baths, and caravanserais. So immense was the number of its edifices, that 'a tax of 8,000 Rs. was annually levied for permitting bricks to be brought from Gour for buildings in Moorshedabad.' These bricks were 'enamelled,' and 'the natives of Bengal now cannot make equal to those manufactured at Gour.' In this state of grandeur, it rivalled Delhi, and was at one time the first city in the empire. The 'mosque, baths, reservoir, and caravanserais, distinguished by the name of Jelally,' were constructed by Sultan Jelaluddeen in 1409. The fortifications round the city were built by Nasir Shah in the middle of the fifteenth century. The *Soona Musjeed*, or the Golden Mosque, and the *Kudum Roosul*, or the Footstep of the Prophet, were erected by Nusserit Shah in the years 1526 and 1532.

Hoomayoon was so pleased with Gour that he

changed the name of that city into *Jennetabad*, or the city of Paradise, and spent in it 'three important months in luxurious gratifications.' The dread of the Mogul name was then so great to the enervated people of Bengal, that Shere Shah fled on the approach of Hoomayoon, the gates of Gour were thrown open to him by the inhabitants, and Bengalee mothers, abbreviating his name into *Hooma*, ever afterwards made use of it to awe their children into silence and sleep.

It is now just three hundred years when Gour was abandoned for its unhealthiness, and the capital was removed to Tondah. Then happened the invasion of Bengal by Akber under the command of Monaim Khan, and the wars waged at that period between the Moguls and Patans are yet mimicked in the *Mongal—Patan* game that form the diversion of the women of Bengal to exercise their martial propensities, albeit the wives and daughters of the most unwarlike nation upon earth, in the moves and manœuvres of a Mogul or Patan general. Monaim Khan had heard much of the ancient and deserted city of Gour. He went to view it, and was so much delighted with the situation, and its many princely edifices, that he resolved to make it the seat of Government again, and removed there with all his troops and officers from Tondah. But 'whether owing to the dampness of the soil, the badness of the water, or the corrupted state of the air, a pestilence very shortly broke out amongst the troops and inhabitants. Thousands died every day; and the living, tired of burying the dead, threw them into the river, without distinction of

Hindoo or Mahomedan. The governor became sensible of his error, but it was too late. He was himself seized with the contagion, and at the end of ten days bade adieu to this transitory world.' This was in the year 1575, from which commenced the ruin of Gour.

'No part of the site of ancient Gour,' says Rennel, 'is nearer to the present bank of the Ganges than four miles and a half; and some parts of it, which were originally washed by that river, are now twelve miles from it. However, a small stream, that communicates with the Ganges, now runs by its west side, and is navigable during the rainy season. On the east side, and in some places within two miles, it has the Mahananda river, which is always navigable, and communicates also with the Ganges. Taking the extent of the ruins of Gour at the most reasonable calculation, it is not less than fifteen miles in length (extending along the old bank of the Ganges), and from two to three in breadth. Several villages stand on part of its site, the remainder is covered with thick forests, the habitations of tigers and other beasts of prey; or become arable land whose soil is chiefly composed of brick-dust. The principal ruins are a mosque lined with black marble, elaborately wrought; and two gates of the citadel, which are strikingly grand and lofty. These fabrics, and some few others, appear to owe their duration to the nature of their materials, which are less marketable, and more difficult to separate, than those of the ordinary brick buildings, which have been, and continue to be, an article of merchandise, and are transported to Moorshe-

dabad, Malda, and other places, for the purpose of building. These bricks are of the most solid texture of any I ever saw; and have preserved the sharpness of their edges, and smoothness of their surfaces, through a series of ages. The situation of Gour was highly suitable for the capital of Bengal and Behar, as united under one government: being nearly centrical with respect to the populous parts of those provinces; and near the junction of the principal rivers that compose that extraordinary inland navigation, for which these provinces are famed; and, moreover, secured by the Ganges and other rivers, on the only quarter from which Bengal has any cause for apprehension.'

The axe and the plough have been at work during the last fifty years to reclaim the jungle, the forest, and wastes of India. But it is doubtful whether they shall ever be applied to clear the wilderness that has formed on the site of Gour, and attracts only sportsmen for tiger-bagging and pig-sticking. The antiquary cannot be expected to carry on his researches amid the haunt of wild beasts and snakes—in the abode of pestilence and death.

> 'Where giant weeds a passage scarce allow
> To halls deserted, portals gaping wide:'

though few spots can be more interesting than the one on which stand the hoary and dear ruins of the magnificent monuments of Gour. The author of the *Ryaz Assulateen*, written in 1787-8, took considerable pains to ascertain his dates by visiting Gour, and reading the inscriptions on the different buildings. Sir Charles

Wilkins, Librarian to the East India Company, published a set of engravings of the ruins of Gour. There is also a correct plan of the city deposited among the records of the India House. Of late, the ruins of Gour were shown in a photographic exhibition.

Three causes—the removal of the capital, the desertion of its old bed by the Ganges, and the unwholesomeness of the region—have contributed to turn Gour into a wilderness. 'It is impossible to pass it,' says Heber, 'without recollecting that what Gour is, Calcutta may any day become, unless the river in its fresh channel should assume a fatal direction, and sweep in its new track our churches, markets, and palaces (by the way of the Loll Diggy and the Ballighaut), to that Salt Water Lake which seems its natural estuary.' This is a sad homily for our house-owners and municipal debenture-holders.

CHAPTER II.

FAR below Gour, but still high in repute, is *Rajmahal*, which possesses an interest derived from many historical recollections and 'storied associations.' The poet in his ardour may say—

> 'Hail, stranger, hail! whose eye shall here survey,
> The path of time, where ruin marks his way;'

but there is nothing to realize preconceived notions. The city, founded by Rajah Maun Sing and adorned by Sultan Shooja, which at one time rivalled Delhi in splendour and luxury, and rung with 'the melody of the flageolet and tambourine,' is now a dismal jungle filled with the moans of the midnight bird and the shrill cries of the jackal. Up to a recent day there were many vestiges of the works of Raja Maun, of the palace of Sultan Shooja, of the stone-roofed and delicately-carved balcony described by Bishop Heber as 'still retaining traces of gilding and Arabic inscriptions,' and of mosques, gateways, and other buildings. They have all disappeared—many of them having been blasted by gunpowder to make room for the Railway works. The place has scarcely any interest for the traveller, and forms only wretched knots of huts dispersed at

considerable and inconvenient distances from each other. The only recommendation of the town is its pretty situation upon a high, steep bank, from which the Himalayas are visible on a clear morning, and below which the Ganges, 'as if incensed at being obliged to make a circuit round the barrier of the hills,' sweeps with great violence, and, chafing in wrath, sometimes rends away several acres of ground. The beautiful, blue, and woody hills are about five miles inland.

It was on the opposite shore to Rajmahal, that Suraja-u-Dowla happened to be detected and seized by his enemies. In his flight from Moorshedabad towards Patna, he became oppressed with hunger, and landed at the cell of a poor Mahomedan dervish on the bank of the river opposite to Rajmahal. Thirteen months before had this dervish been deprived of his ears by the order of the fugitive tyrant, and he had good reason to remember his person, and recognize him in his disguise. Receiving his guests courteously, and setting about to prepare a dish of *kicheery* for them, he privately sent off a man across the river, and leading a brother of Meer Jaffer to the fugitive's hiding-place, had him seized and conveyed to Moorshedabad to revenge the loss of his ears.

From Rajmahal, we carry the reader on board the India General Steam Navigation Company's steamer *Agra* with the flat *Chumbal*. It was on a bright sunny afternoon that we turned our back upon the desolate city of Rajmahal, and when we were fairly embarked

upon the wide expanse of water, the vessel parted the foaming waves with her bow, and rode triumphantly upon them 'like a thing of life.' It is something to experience the pleasures of dashing up the classic waters of the Ganges in a steam-boat at the rate of four miles an hour, out-blustering the winds and waves, not caring a nonce for the gods presiding over them. In about two hours we passed by Caragola, opposite to which is *Sahibgunge*, sprung into a picturesque town in a wild moorland. Next we approached the *Mootee Jhurna* waterfall, which is seen tumbling down the mountain in beautiful cascades. Towards evening we were moving close to *Secreegully*, and high on the summit of the rocky eminence gleamed the white tomb of the Mussulman saint and warrior. 'The tomb,' says Heber, 'is well worth the trouble of climbing the hill. It stands on a platform of rock, surrounded by a battlemented wall, with a gate very prettily ornamented, and rock benches all round to sit or pray on. The chamber of the tomb is square, with a dome roof, very neatly built, covered with excellent chunam, which, though three hundred years old, remains entire, and having within it a carved stone mound, like the hillocks in an English churchyard, where sleeps the scourge of the idolaters.'

The famous *Terriagurry Pass* is better seen from the train, which runs past by the foot of the slate-built fort that formerly guarded the entrance. The narrow pass, about a quarter of a mile wide, is flanked by two isolated cliffs that afford a commanding position from their lofty,

peaked heights, to keep an enemy at bay from approaching the wooded valleys and narrow defiles of the country. Probably, the fortifications, seen in ruins on the southern cliff, were first erected by Shere Shah, and then repaired by Sultan Shooja, when they had respectively to defend themselves—the one, from the approach of Hoomayoon, and the other from that of Meer Jumla. There may exist inscriptions, and local inquiries on the spot ought to settle the truth. Passing Terriagurry, one falls into the *Anga* of ancient Hindoo geography. The stupendous wall of rocks, the detached cliffs, the sloping dales, the warm dry soil, the stouter and healthier cattle, and a more manly-looking race—proclaim it to be a different country from that of Bengal.

It was near sunset, and the chain of hills stood full in sight, rising in lofty ranks. High above the rest towered *Peer-Pointee*, and projected far in a promontory into the bed of the river. Many centuries before Father or St Pointee had chosen this favoured spot for his abode, had the banks of the Ganges here been covered with shrines, altars, and temples of the Buddhists, and the remains of these antiquities form great curiosities for the traveller. The *Pattur-ghatta* cave, with its sculptures, is a remarkable object for sight-seeing. Long had a tradition been current, that a certain Rajah had desired to explore it, and set out with an immense suite, 100,000 torch-bearers, and 100,000 measures of oil, but never returned. The interminable cave of native imagination has been ex-

plored, and found to be not more than 136 feet long, and 24 broad. It has no pillar or beam to support its roof.

The Mussulman saint after whom Peer-Pointee is now called, lies buried here. His tomb stands on a little cliff above the river, overhung by some fine bamboos.

Next is *Colgong*, a pretty and pleasant spot. Here, in the bed of the river, are seen three very picturesque rocks. In vulgar Hindoo tradition, they are supposed to have formed the hearth of Bheema Pandava. This is a difficult place to navigate for its strong eddies and rapids, and, under the pressure of a little more steam, the vessel proceeded like a bellowing, blowing, and blustering monster, at which Bheema would have been scared to take to his heels, leaving his savoury pot of *kicheery*. In passing, we found the rocks to consist of huge boulders piled one upon another, and tufted with trees growing in their clefts. The westernmost one is the largest, and is inhabited by a *fuqueer*.

Eighteen miles higher up is *Bhagulpore*, the capital of the ancient Angas, and the Champa of our old geography. The Buddhists are said to have taken possession of it prior to the Christian era, and, most probably, to have retained it till the downfall of their religion in the eleventh century. Hwen Thsang speaks of it in his itinerary, and alludes to the 'ruins of several monasteries in its neighbourhood.' But though of such great antiquity, and promising an interesting field for observation, it has scarcely any curiosities for the tra-

veller. The town is situated in a low, open valley, wooded with a super-abundance of trees and vegetation, the putrefaction of which engenders the malaria that is the cause of its unhealthiness. ' Much of its salubrity is owing also to the impregnation of the soil with saline matter. On a subsequent occasion, when we had put up here in a bungalow, we found the ground-floor to be as moist and damp as in Calcutta. The air was heavy, and had no dryness even in November. The excess of vegetation closing the prospects on all sides, made the spirits gloomy, and to lose all their elasticity. Bishop Heber says, the place is very much infested by cobras —well may they luxuriate in such a dark jungly land. Nothing but mean huts scattered at places, and a few decayed mosques, make up the features of the native portion of the town,

The most curious of all objects at Baghulpore are two ancient *Round Towers*, each about seventy feet high. Nobody now remembers anything about them, and the age and object of their erection are matters involved in the deepest obscurity. From their 'close resemblance to the *pyrethra* so common in Affghanistan and elsewhere,' they are supposed to be 'Buddhist monuments of yore.' They happen to be so little known, that, on inquiring about them from a Baboo, resident here for twenty years, he answered that he was not aware of their existence.

Cleveland's Monuments.—There are two of them. The one erected by the Hindoos is in the form of a pagoda, in a pretty situation by the river side. It is a

tribute of Hindoo gratitude to commemorate the goodness and generosity of their benefactor. The other one was erected by Government to perpetuate the memory of his meritorious services. Upon that monument is the following inscription, remarkable for truths deserving the widest publicity:—

TO THE MEMORY OF AUGUSTUS CLEVELAND, ESQ.

Late Collector of the districts of Bhagulpore and Rajmahal,

Who, without bloodshed or the terrors of authority,
Employing only the means of conciliation, confidence, and benevolence,
Attempted and accomplished
The entire subjection of the lawless and savage inhabitants of the Jungleterry of Rajmahal,
Who had long infested the neighbouring lands by their predatory incursions,
Inspired them with a taste for the arts of civilized life,
And attached them to the British Government by a conquest over their minds—
The most permanent, as the most rational mode of dominion.

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL AND COUNCIL OF BENGAL,

In honour of his character, and for example to others,
Have ordered this monument to be erected.
He departed this life on the 13th day of January—1784, aged 29.

It is particularly remarkable, that the Government which endorsed the opinion that *a conquest over the mind is the most permanent, as well as the most rational, mode of dominion*, should have undertaken to depose Cheyte Sing, rob the Begums of Oude, and ravage the fair province of Rohilcund.

Very few men are aware that the school first set up by Mr Cleveland for the education of the hill-people has produced a Santhal gentleman, who has embraced Christianity, connected himself by marriage in a respectable family, is brother-in-law to a gentleman of

56059

the Calcutta bar, and holds a respectable post under Government at Bhagulpore.

The *Mount Mandar*, celebrated in the Pouranic legends for the churning of the ocean, lies southward of Bhagulpore. It is remarkable as being of granite, whilst all the other hills in the neighbourhood are of limestone. Originally, it was a seat of Buddhist worship, and a place of Buddhist pilgrimage, when these wild and uninhabited parts probably formed populous and flourishing districts. This was, we think, when Buddhist kings reigned in Magadha and Gour. On the downfall of Buddhism, Mandar fell into the hands of the Shivites, and became a seat of their god so as to rival Benares, and form, as the Kasikhund states, a second *Kailasa*. The legend of the churning of the ocean is an interpolation in the Mahabharat, which evidently refers to the contest between the Brahmins (soors) and the Buddhists (asoors) —the great serpent Vasookee—alluding to the sect of the *Nagas*.

Jangerah and Sultangung.—Sailing up from Bhagulpore, 'the first object of interest which arrests the attention of the traveller is a singular mass of granite towering abruptly to the height of about a hundred feet from the bed of the river. Its natural beauty and romantic situation have long since dedicated it to the service of religion; and Jangeerah, the name of the rock in question, has been associated with many a tale of love and arms.' The 'Fakeer of Jangeerah' is the subject of a poem by that gifted East Indian, Mr

Derozio, who first planted the seed of reform in the Hindoo mind, and ushered into existence the class now known under the designation of *Young Bengal.*

The rock is separated from the mainland by a distance of about a hundred yards, and stands facing the mart of Sultangung. Crowning the top is 'a small stone temple, which is visible from a great distance, and serves as a beacon tower to the mariner. The presiding deity of this sanctuary is named Gaibinatha, a form of Siva. The temple bears no inscription, and from its make and appearance does not seem to be more than two or three centuries old.' The surface of the rock is carved in many bas-relief figures of the Pouranic gods. But there are older Buddhist figures, that 'occupying more centrical positions than the Hindoo ones, and appearing to be more worn than the latter, afford conclusive evidence of the place having been originally a Buddhist sanctuary, which the Brahmins appropriated to themselves since the downfall of Buddhism.'

It is but half a mile to Jangeerah from the Railway station of Sultangung. 'The space between the mart and the Railway station,' observes Baboo Rajendro Lalla Mitra, 'forms a quadrangle of 1200 feet by 800. It seems never to have been under much cultivation, and is covered by the *debris* of old buildings, the foundations of which have lately been excavated for ballast for the Railway.' The high grassy knoll perched with a neat bungalow, that meets the eye of the passer-by in the train, is but a ridge of rubbish lying at the south-east

corner of the quadrangle. There have been discovered here chambers, and courtyards, and halls, and walls having 'a thick coating of sand and stucco such as are to be seen in modern Indian houses,' and floors 'made of concrete and stucco, and painted over in fresco of a light ochrous colour,' and 'the foundation and the side pillars of a large gateway:' from all which the spot is supposed to have been the site of 'a large Buddhist monastery or Vihara, such as at one time existed at Sarnath, Sanchi, Buddha-Gya, Manikyala, and other places, and at its four corners had four chapels for the use of the resident monks.' The thick, large-sized bricks employed in the construction of the building, have been found to be of the kind that 'was in use for upwards of seven hundred years down to the fifth or sixth century of the Christian era.' This is a proof of the antiquity of the Vihara at least prior to the last-mentioned centuries. That it was much older beyond that period is satisfactorily proved by the 'inscriptions on the minor figures, in the *Gupta* character of the third and fourth century, which show that the Vihara, with its chief *lares* and *penates*, had been established a considerable period before that time, probably at the beginning of the Christian era, or even earlier.'

No doubt remains as to the Vihara from the discovery of a colossal figure of Buddha, full seven feet high, of the tall North Indian and not the squat Bhot type, that seems to have been the principal object of worship. 'The figure is erect, standing in the attitude of delivering a lecture. The right hand is lifted in the act of

exhortation; the left holds the hem of a large sheet of cloth which is loosely thrown over the body. Both hands bear the impress of a lotus, the emblem, according to Indian chiromancy, of universal supremacy, and as such is always met with on the hands of Vishnu, Brahma, and some other Hindoo divinities. The ears are pendulous and bored, and the hair on the head disposed in curled buttons in the way they are usually represented on Burmese figures, and not very unlike the buttons on the heads of some of the Nineveh basreliefs. The lips are thin, and the face, though more rounded than oval, is not remarkable for any prominence of the cheek-bone. On the forehead there is a circular *tilak* or auspicious mark. The material is a very pure copper cast in two layers, the inner one in segments on an earthen mould, and held together by iron bands now very much worn down by rust; the outer layer of the copper has also oxidized in different places and become quite spongy. The casting of the face down to the breast, was effected in one piece; the lower parts down to the knee in another; and then the legs, feet, hands, and back in several pieces. A hole has been bored through the breast, and chips have been knocked off from other parts of the body since the exhumation of the figure, evidently with a view to ascertain if it did not contain hidden treasure, such as is said to have been found by Mahmood in the belly of the famous idol of Somnauth, but it has led to the discovery of nothing beyond the mould on which the figure had been cast. The substance of this mould

looks like a friable cinder. Originally it consisted of a mixture of sand, clay, charcoal, and paddy husk, of the last of which traces are still visible under the microscope.'*

Minor figures, carved in basalt, and in style and attitude resembling the copper figure, have also been discovered, with the Buddhist creed '*Ye dharmahetu*,' &c., engraved in the Gupta character on their pedestals. The remains of a mud fort, usually attached to a Buddhist monastery for its protection and security, are also found at a distance of about three quarters of a mile —forming 'a square mound of about 400 yards on each side, raised to the height of about 20 feet from the plain, and now the site of an indigo factory. To the south of it there is a large tank which yielded the earth of which the mound was formed.' Abundance of 'little fictile bell-shaped structures called *chaityas*, have also turned out with inscriptions in the *Kutila* type. This character had a long range of four centuries, from the 8th to the 11th, and the monuments on which it is found may fairly be concluded to have existed at least down to the 7th, 8th, or even the 9th or 10th century. Though not spoken of by Fa Hian or Hwen Thsang, the destruction of the Vihara may be supposed to have taken place on the triumph of Brahminism over Buddhism, or otherwise no reason can be assigned for the iconoclastic vengeance which could not have been inflicted unless by the ruthless hands of adverse sectarians.

* 'On the Buddhist Remains of Sultangung.' By Baboo Rajendra Lalla Mittra.

By rail it is but an hour's journey from Sultangung to *Jumalpore*. The tunnel here, bored through the obdurate rock for nearly half a mile, is such a prodigious work of human labour and skill, as, in the language of Brahminic hyperbole, would have been represented to have been perforated by the *Gandiva* of Arjoona for a passage into the country of the *Angas*. By river it took us half a day to get up to *Monghyr*, passing the beautiful Kurruckpoor hills, on a peak of which was the hermitage of Rishsyasringha Muni, and where a *mela* is annually held in honour of his memory. Near one of the low rocks projecting into the river, are the well-known hot-springs of *Seetakoond*, famous in Hindoo legends for being the spot where Seeta underwent the ordeal of fire to prove her untainted chastity from the violence of Ravana.

Monghyr is a pretty town in a charming green valley, with the broad river washing it on two sides and the hills in the back-ground. The ancient Hindoos had an eye for all beautiful and advantageous localities, and such a romantic and commanding position as Monghyr has, could scarcely have been left unoccupied by them. In the absence of positive information, this is an indirect argument in favour of the antiquity of the place, originally called *Mudgulpoor*. It was on a very good day that we happened to arrive at Monghyr, where the anchorage ghaut presented a lively and busy scene of preparations for the reception of Lord Canning, then on his vice-regal tour to the Upper Provinces, with all the means and appliances at the disposal of a provincial

town. The steepy bank had been smoothed into an easy slope, and spread with a crimson cloth for a landing place The Civil authorities and Railway officers of the station lay waiting upon the shore, while a little knot or crowd had formed itself to witness a sight which it seldom falls to their lot to enjoy. Our steamer had scarcely anchored to coal for half an hour, before the Governor-General's barge appeared in sight, and slowly steaming up came off town, and dropped its anchors in the mid-stream. The *Agra* immediately hoisted up its flag in honour, and some of the authorities started in their boats to offer their welcome to the Viceroy. He landed in a few minutes amidst no booming of guns, or presentment of arms, but simply the nods and salaams of the assembled multitude. His principal object in honouring this town with a visit was, we were told, to inspect the Jumalpore tunnel.

In Monghyr there are no ancient buildings, or ruins of them, to render it a place of antiquarian interest. The only object to detain the traveller is its fort, which stands on a rocky promontory, and covers a large extent of ground, measuring 4000 feet in length by 3500 in breadth. On three sides the ramparts are defended by a wide and deep moat, filled only during the rains, and on the fourth is the Ganges, which flows here with strong eddies and currents, and forms one of the difficult passages for navigation. There are rocks in the bed of the stream against which the waters beat in regular surges, and it is pleasant to see them break immediately beneath your feet from the bastion above.

The fort is now dismantled, and merely surrounded with high stone walls, having four gateways, the principal of which is called the *Lall Durwaza*. Upon two or three slabs of the side pillars of the eastern gateway, we observed some small, worn-out bas-relief Buddhistic figures, from which it was evident that they had once belonged to a Buddhist temple standing at this town in a former age, and which afforded a proof of its antiquity. Inside the enclosure 'is an ample plain of fine turf, dotted with a few trees, and two or three noble tanks, the largest covering a couple of acres' — a state of things just the same as seen by Heber forty years ago. Two high grassy knolls are enclosed within the rampart, 'occupying two opposite angles of the fort, which is an irregular square with twelve bastions.' On one of these eminences is a handsome house, originally built for the military commander of the district, but now occupied by the Civil Judge of the station. There is in the fort a beautiful mosque, built of black marble. The palace of Sultan Soojah is traced in the altered building that is now occupied as the shop of Thomas and Co., and where we saw a Mussulman gent come and buy an English spelling-book. This is the best located of all buildings in Monghyr. Near it was shown to us the ruins of a vast well, and a subterranean way communicating with the Ganges, through which the Begums used to go to the river for ablutions. The masonry works of the passage are in a ruinous state, and grown over with jungles. The little stone-ghaut is yet in a fair condition.

Monghyr is a favourite town to old, invalided military pensioners and their families, who enjoy here a climate and picturesque scenery that reconcile them to a life of exile, and who at last repose in the 'small but neat burial-ground, fenced in with a low wall, and crammed full of obelisk tombs.' The town is large enough and well kept up, having pretty roads and streets with a moderate population. The river-side face of the native town has an imposing appearance with its high stone-ghauts, temples, and shady groves of ancient trees. 'Though all the houses are small,' says Heber, 'there are many of them with an upper story, and the roofs, instead of the flat terrace or thatch, which are the only alternations in Bengal, are generally sloping, with red tiles, having little earthenware ornaments on their gables. The shops are numerous, and I was surprised at the neatness of the kettles, tea-trays, guns, pistols, toasting-forks, cutlery, and other things of the sort which may be procured in this tiny Birmingham. I found afterwards that this place had been from very early antiquity celebrated for its smiths, who derived their art from the Hindoo Vulcan, who had been solemnly worshipped, and is supposed to have had a workshop here.' In simple language, the mythologic story of the Bishop has a reference to that iron-mining in the neighbourhood, which naturally made Monghyr a manufacturing town of hard-ware; but, as such, it has declined much from its former prosperity, and is now reputed for its table dish-mats, straw hand-punkahs, and baskets of various patterns,

ladies' handsome light wooden, jet-black polished necklaces and bracelets, children's painted wooden toys, and strong palm-wood polished sticks and bamboo canes. Not more than twenty-five years ago, the agriculturists here were so simple as to sell their produce in heaps and not by weight, when many mahajuns made their fortunes. Ghee could be had at ten rupees the maund, that now hardly sells below thirty. Many hill-women and their children are observed in this town. The great tutelary goddess of Monghyr is *Chundee Mata*, an emblem of Kali, lying in a desolate part of the town that has been abandoned. Referring to the aquatic habits of the low people here, Heber relates the instance of 'a pretty young country-woman ducking under water for so long a time that he began to despair of her re-appearance.' We observed two men come across from the other shore swimming in a standing posture, with little bundles of reeds under their armpits, and pails of milk upon their heads. Herds of cattle also cross over with their keepers to browse on the marshy islets in the river.

Passing Monghyr, we mention a place that has come to our knowledge under the name of *Paliputra*. It is a little insignificant village where dealers go to buy grain from first hands. Situated nearly a hundred miles below Patna, the mere coincidence of its name can hardly justify us to assume its identity with Palibothra.

From Jumalpore to Luckeeserai and the other stations, the rail takes us through a hilly country dis-

closing a succession of beautiful prospects. In proceeding up the river, Soorjagurrah, Bar, and Futwa occur as interesting places, for the highly cultivated state of the country in which they are situated, and for the beauty and extent of the woods of palm and other fruit-trees, stretching for several miles in succession, and offering a prospect of the most pleasing sylvan scenery. It is curious to observe the practice of planting palms in the hollows of the trunks of decayed peepul trees, first met with in the gardens on this side of Bhaugulpore.

It was a calm and bright evening, and the last hues of sunset had left a soft stain of crimson on the river, when we slowly approached and anchored off the old and far-famed town of *Patna*. From on board the steamer, the town rose full in sight on a steep precipitous bank, and opened upon our eager eyes with its high stone-ghauts, its various buildings half shadowed by trees and half abutting on the river, its remains of old walls, towers, and bastions, and its multitude of trading vessels, all combining to make up a striking frontage, that stretched along the river till it was lost in the murky distance. The principal ghaut, before which the steamer had moored, looked most picturesque, with lofty buildings and shrines peeping through the branches of hoary banians and peepuls, and there were groups of men in graceful drapery congregated to witness the throwing of the *Jugodhatri* into the waters, which added considerably to the liveliness of the scene.

Few places in India are so old, and recall to mind

so many associations, as the *Pataliputra* of the Hindoos, the *Palibothra* of the Greeks, and the *Potolitse* of the Chinese, all referring to the city which is known in our day under the name of Patna. The name of Patali-putra does not occur either in Menu or the Mahabharat, the capital of ancient Magadha having in those ages been *Rajgriha.* It was in the middle of the sixth century before Christ that *Ajatsutra* founded the city of Pataliputra. 'This prince,' says Lassen, 'appears to have long had the intention of conquering *Vasali;** for it is recorded that his two ministers, Sunitha and Vasyankara, founded in the village of *Patali* a fortress against the Vriggi; this took place a short time before the death of Buddha. It is, no doubt, the place where the town Patali-putra, afterwards so famous, arose; its situation is distinctly defined by the circumstance, that Buddha on his tour from Nalanda to Vaisali came to that place.' Under its ancient name of Pataliputra, the place stands before the eyes of the modern traveller as the capital of the Nandas, of Chandra-Gupta, and of Asoca; as the scene where were played those outwitting Machiavellian policies between Rakshasa and Chanakya, which form the subject of the drama of *Mudra Rakshasa,* where Megasthenes had arrived on an embassy from Seleucus and resided for many years, leaving behind a record that possesses no ordinary claims upon our attention; whence Asoca issued his famous edicts about Buddhism, and sent missionaries to preach in

* Identified by General Cunningham with the modern Besarh, 20 miles north of Hajipoor.

Egypt, Syria, and Greece; and whence vessels plied to Ceylon in a fortnight, and carried Mahindra with a branch of the sacred peepul tree of Buddha. It is from the writings of Megasthenes that we learn that 'Palibothra was eight miles long and one and a half broad, defended by a deep ditch and a high rampart, with 570 towers, and 64 gates'—a state of grandeur of which not a tithe is possessed by the present city.

Much doubt had prevailed for a long time as to the site of Palibothra, of which such a splendid account had been left behind by the Greeks. Dr Spry states 'that as many cities have been brought forward by modern writers to prefer their claims to the Palibothra of India, as of old contested for the birth-place of Homer.' There was D'Anville who identified it with Allahabad, Wilford with Rajmahal, and Franklin with Bhaugulpore: until, at last, the *Erranoboas* of Arrian was found to correspond with the *Hiraneyabah*, or the Soane; the name of Pataliputra turned out in Hindoo writings to accord with that of Palibothra, and the travels of Fa Hian and Hwen Thsang shed a light on the question to leave no more doubt as to the identity of the place. In the drama of Mudra Rakshasa, 'one of the characters describes the trampling down of the banks of the *Soane*, as the army approaches to *Pataliputra*.'

Though the Hindoo dramatist has laid many of his scenes at Pataliputra, little, however, can be gleaned from him as to the topography of that ancient city. Besides, we think his accounts to refer to an after-

period—if not to his own age, at least to the age of the *Gupta* kings in the second and third centuries, when, probably, it acquired the poetic appellation of Kusoomapur, rendered by the Chinese into *Kia-so-mo-polu*. This is a name which it must have derived from the beauty of the numerous fields, gardens, and groves by which the place seems to have been surrounded in all ages. The *Pratiredaka* or informers of Asoca were to bring him intelligence even when he was 'promenading in his garden.' There is a passage in the drama alluded to above, where Rakshasa repeats the following lines :—

> 'These gardens mark the city's pleasant confines,
> And oft were honoured by my sovereign's presence.'

In the present day, there is no end of topes and orchards and gardens surrounding Patna, and forming the suburban retreats of its inhabitants.

Hwen Thsang next treats us with an account of Patna in the seventh century. The court of the kings of Magadha, remarked by Wilford 'as one of the most brilliant that ever existed,' had then lost much of its splendour. The lord paramountcy of the Mauryas and Guptas had become extinct, and their sovereignty broken up. Pataliputra then acknowledged the supremacy of Harsha Vardhana, and its Rajah was an attendent tributary in the triumphal procession of that monarch from Patna to Kanouge. The city then abounded with many Buddhist temples and monasteries but the monks are represented as having fallen off in practice from the rigorous system enjoined to them,

and merged into the laity, and 'living with the heretics' and 'no better than they.'

In the time of the Mussulman conquest, the capital of Behar is said to have been removed to the town of that name, and its Rajah to have become so degenerated as to abscond from his capital, leaving it destitute, to be taken by 'a detachment of two hundred men, who put a number of the unopposing Brahmins to the sword, and plundered all the inhabitants.' It is not known when the removal of the capital to Behar had taken place. Probably it happened on the ascendancy of the Rahtores at Kannouje, or of the Senas at Gour. But no doubt is to be entertained as to that removal having been the cause which first led to the decline of Patna, and to its gradual insignificance and obscurity, owing to which it is not mentioned in the early years of Mahomedan history.

As described by Ralph Fitch, Patna was in the end of the sixteenth century 'a large city, but contained only houses of earth and straw. The country was much infested by robbers, wandering like the Arabians from place to place. The people were greatly imposed upon by idle persons assuming the appearance of sanctity. One of these sat asleep on horseback in the market-place, while the crowd came and reverentially touched his feet. They thought him a great man, but—sure he was a lazy lubber—I left him there sleeping.'

Modern Patna has an imposing appearance from the river. But inside the walls, the town is disgusting, disagreeable, and mean. The huts and houses are

unsightly and slovenly. The passages are narrow, crooked, and irregular, 'so as to render a passage through them on an elephant or in a palankeen always difficult, and often impracticable.' There is only one street tolerably wide, that runs from the eastern to the western gate, but it is by no means straight nor regularly built. In the middle of the town is a long narrow sheet of water, which, as it dries up, becomes exceedingly dirty, offensive, and malarious. The suburbs are built in a straggling and ill-defined manner, and they are bare and thin of population. The country here is low and flooded during the rains, and being thickly planted, is the source of great unhealthiness to the town. Ancient Pataliputra had been eight miles long and two and a half broad. Modern Patna is little more than a mile from east to west, and three-quarters of a mile from north to south—though the inhabitants pretend it to extend nearly nine miles along the banks of the Ganges from Jaffer Khan's garden to Bankipore. Of the towers and gateways spoken of by Megasthenes, or of the lofty pillars, columns, and turrets of the *Suganga* palace mentioned by the Hindoo dramatist, not a trace exists surviving the ravages of time and war. There is no building in Patna now which is two hundred years old. Chanakya's house with 'old walls, from which a thatched roof projects, covered by a parcel of fuel stuck up to dry, and furnished with a bit of stone for bruising cow-dung fuel,' may easily be recognised in a squalid hut of the present day. But there is no lofty building from which Chandragupta may see

'the city decorated as suits the festival of the autumnal full moon.' The Buddhist shrines and temples have been displaced by those of Mahadeva, and Gopala, and Patnadevi. Instead of a Buddhist monastery seen by Hwen Thsang, we see now a Sikh synagogue, and Mahomedan musjeeds. There are no more celebrated in Patna the festivals in which 'sportive bands of either sex spread mirth and music through the echoing streets, and the citizens with their wives are abroad and merry-making.' The days are gone when Hindoo females showed themselves in public, but rather the streets are made narrow now 'from jealousy to keep persons of rank from approaching their women.' The Mahomedan is now the predominating element in Patna, and a Mahomedan viceroy wanted to change its name into Azimabad. The Mahomedans form a large part of the population of Patna, and a hundred thousand of them assemble at the Emambarah to celebrate the Mohurrum. From a stronghold of Buddhism, it is now a city of Sheiks and Syuds, to keep whom in a good humour an especial deputation of one of their countrymen was made in the late mutiny. Now that Delhi and Lucknow have ceased to be the great centres of Mahomedan intrigue, Patna is the only remaining place where the knot of Mahomedans is strong and influential.

It is not easy to tell of what the buildings in ancient Pataliputra were principally constructed. In the present day, they are seen to be built, for the most part, of wood and bricks. Two-thirds of a pucka-building in Patna are of wood. Not only is this the material of

beams, doors, and windows, but of pillars, floors, and half of the walls. The booths that project into the street and the verandahs that overhang them, are all of wooden architecture. This is because timber is so abundant and cheap in Patna, being easily procured and floated down from the forests of the Terai. The oldest part of Patna on the river-bank is very closely built. The streets are overhung by the upper stories, and have an old pavement of stone. They are so narrow that draining, clearing, and lighting them are all out of the question.

No old remains, as it has been said above, exist in Patna, unless a lofty mound of earth, with a Mahomedan Durgah on its top, near the Railway station, may be taken as a *stupa* of Asoca. The oldest ruins are those of the fort defended by Ramnarain against the Shazada, and situated very advantageously on a high bank above the river. The citadel has only a few of its bastions, and nothing more.

The only object for sight-seeing in Patna, is the monument over the 150 Englishmen massacred in cold blood by Sumroo under the orders of Meer Cossim. It is a tall, slender column, of alternate black and yellow stone, that lifts its head about 30 feet high in the old English burial-ground at Patna.

The trading quarters of Patna are out of the walled town, in the eastern suburbs, called Maroogunj. It is such 'a large mart, that 1700 boats of burthen have been counted lying here at one time.' Unless the rolling-stock of the Railway Companies be augmented

to the number of boats at each of the stations, they can never hope to divert all the trade from the river. Patna is a noted manufactory of table-cloths 'of any extent, pattern, and texture that may be ordered.' The Chinese have forgotten Pataliputra, and know Patna now for its opium. In Patna are many wealthy Hindoo merchants and bankers.

Two facts came to our knowledge as peculiar to the inhabitants of Patna. One of them relates to the practice of celebrating their marriages only in the months of January and February. They are preferred, we think, for their being pleasant dry months, and this marriage-season has the effect of producing an important demand in the piece-goods market for local consumption. The other fact is that no Hindoo dying at Patna is burnt here, but on the other shore. It may be, that ancient Magadha is a banned land for not having been included in the *Puniya-bhumi* of the Aryas.

To *Bankipore*, the Civil station of Patna—a distance of six miles. Here are the Opium Warehouses, the Courts of Justice, and the residences of the Europeans. In Bankipore is seen a high massive building, shaped like a dome, with two flights of steps outside to ascend to the top, resembling, says Heber, 'the old prints of the Tower of Babel.' There is a circular opening at the top to pour in corn, and a small door at the bottom to take it out. The building in question was erected by Government in 1783, after a severe famine, as a public granary to keep down the price of grain, and marks the politico-economical knowledge of the day. It was

'abandoned on discovery of its inefficacy, since no means in their hands, nor any building which they could construct, without laying on fresh taxes, would have been sufficient to collect or contain more than one day's provision for the vast population of their territories.' Moreover, it displays such architectural blockheadism 'as, by a refinement in absurdity, the door at the bottom is made to open inwards, and, consequently, when the granary was full, could never have been opened at all.' Passing up in the train, a glimpse of this remarkable tower may be caught by the traveller through the groves and orchards extending behind Bankipore.

Near the Bankipore station, a road has branched off to *Gaya*, six miles south of which is Boodh Gaya, famous for being the spot of the holy *Peepul tree*, under which Gautama, or Sakya Muni, sat for six years and obtained Buddha-hood. There is a temple 'more than two thousand years old,' in which 'three complete arches have been observed by Baboo Rajendro Lall Mittra,' as affording 'a remarkable proof of the Hindoos having had a knowledge of the principle of the arch at a very early period, though the credit of it has been denied them by all our Anglo-Indian antiquaries.' This is the place to which pilgrims from China and Burmah travelled in former ages, and on the ruins of which has modern Gaya risen, supplanting the ancient Buddhapad by the Vishnupad of the Brahmins.

The *Herihar-Chetra* and *Sonepore Races*.—Took a boat at the ferry-ghaut of Bankipore, and set out for the *mela*. On a tongue of land formed by the junction of

two rivers, and opposite the city of Patna, stands a lofty white temple that glistens from afar, and greets the eye across the immense expanse of the waters. The sacred Gundhuki, that supplies the Hindoo with his *silas*, rising from the foot of the Dhawalagiri, here discharges its tribute to the Ganges immediately below the pagoda, and separates it from the town of Hajeepore on the opposite bank. The confluence is famous in the Pouranic legends as being the spot where the *Elephant* and the *Tortoise* waged their wars, till carried off by Garuda in his talons to the forests of Noimisha. The country is flat, but fruitful and interesting. Fields of barley and wheat, fine natural meadows, profusion of groves and orchards, and herds of diversified cattle, make up a prospect delightful to the vision and mind. Throughout the year the shrine is little frequented by pilgrims. But towards the full moon of *Kartick*, the holy spot attracts immense multitudes, and a fair is held there, the largest perhaps in all India. The solitary fields are covered with sheds and tents for many an acre, and grow into a city of vast size and population. From a distance of four miles the hum of voices reached our ears as we sailed down the river. The mela is particularly remarkable for being a great cattle-fair. Cows and calves, ploughing oxen, cart-bullocks, and buffaloes, sell to the number of some thirty thousand. Not less than ten thousand horses change their masters. The number of elephants brought for sale sometimes amounts to two thousand. The congregation of men may be estimated at near two hundred thousand. The attractive part of

the fair consists of rows of booths extending in several streets, and displaying copper and brass wares, European and native goods, toys, ornaments, jewellery, and all that would meet the necessity or luxury of a large part of the neighbouring population. Numerous are the shops for the sale of grain and sweetmeats. Near five hundred tents of various size and patterns are pitched for the accommodation of the rajahs, zemindars, and merchants who come to the fair, and the canvas-city displays a scene of great gorgeousness. They are splendidly illuminated at night, and thrown open to all descriptions of visitors. Much money is expended on the nautch-girls, whose dancing and songs form the great source of Indian entertainment. Parties of strolling actors, dressed fantastically, ply to and fro, dancing and singing. The river affords one of the gayest spectacles of the *fête*. It is crowded with boats of all descriptions, fitted out with platforms and canopies, and lighted with variegated lamps, torches, and blue-lights. Upon them the guests are entertained with nautch. The Europeans visiting the fair add to its amusements by their pleasures of the turf. There is no more ceremony than that of ablution on the day of the full moon, and a poojah to the emblem of Heri-Hara, in honour of whom the mela is held.

The fair breaks up after a fortnight, and the place is left to its solitariness for the next twelvemonths.

Dinapore—the military station of Patna, and distant from it about fourteen miles, has only its barracks and the bungalows usual in a cantonment. Merely a passing

view of it is enough to allay the curiosity of the traveller. Four miles north of Dinapore is the junction of the Soane with the Ganges. The alterations in the course of the first river, and the small extent to which Patna has shrunk in modern times, naturally lead men to doubt at first the identity of that city with Palibothra. The vast and broad sheet of water formed by the confluence makes a grand sight, and is contemplated with no little pride when puny man has made the Soane

'Tamely to endure a bridge of wondrous length,'

the reality of which has surpassed the fictitious *Setabund* of Valmiki.

Crossing the Soane bridge, the next place of note upon the rail is *Arrah*, situated in a fertile and well-cultivated country. It was at Arrah that 'a handful of heroes defended a billiard-room against drought, and hunger, and cannon, and the militia of a warlike region, backed by three regiments of regular infantry.'

Chuprah, on the left bank of the Ganges, has a pretty situation. Tieffenthaler describes it as 'extending half a mile along the Ganges consisting of straw-roofed buildings, and containing French, English, and Dutch factories.' Hereabouts are the principal saltpetre works. But England's prohibition of the export of that article during the Russian war, hastened the ruin of that trade by rousing the energy of the Continental Powers to shake off their dependence upon England for saltpetre.

Five or six miles above Chuprah, the Ganges re-

ceives the tribute of the Gograh—the *Surjoo* of the Ramayana. The junction of the two streams presents a noble appearance. The immense expanse raises an idea of the sea. Our view was limited only to a circle of water all round us, and we gazed upon nothing but the sky and water—the distant trees beyond the limits of the circle seeming like a streak in the horizon.

Our progress had been most favourable the whole day. But the course of a vessel through the shoals and sand-banks of the Ganges, like 'the course of true love,' never runs smooth. In nearing Buxar, the steamer struck ground, and kept us at a stand-still for an hour, until it floated by dint of hard-hawsing, and extra pressure of steam now and then.

It was almost dusk when we reached and anchored before *Buxar*, and were permitted to have a mere glimpse of it from on board. The British power made its territorial progress in India like the *Bamun Avatar* of the Hindoos, taking long strides, and making its first step at Plassey, the second at Buxar, and the third almost at the frontiers of India. The battle No. 2nd fought here opened the way to Upper Hindoostan to their advance, and placed its fair provinces at their disposal. They were distributed like 'up-town lots' in a reclamation speculation, and Corah, Allahabad, and the Doab were given away to the ex-Shazada Shah Alum, Oude to Shuja Dowla—while the English took in their hands the key of the exchequer of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. The fortress, occupied at the expense of nearly 5000 lives on both sides, is still in good order, and stands

upon an elevated ground, whence 'the view, upon a fine day, presents a scene infinitely gratifying to the senses. The eye rests on an extended plain, skirted by a broad winding river, chequered with exuberant fields of corn, groves of lofty spreading trees, and large villages; the whole combining some of the grandest objects in nature, and impressing the mind with cheerfulness and content.' Forster mentions that 'on a small mount to the westward of the Fort of Buxar, an edifice, said to be erected to the memory of Ram, still exists, and that the Hindoos hold this monumental curiosity in a degree of estimation not inferior to that which the zealous and devout Catholics entertain for the holy House of Loretto. It would appear that Ram, whilst a youth, made a visit to this eminence and remained on it seven days. During this sojourn, some learned master of the science taught him the art of managing the bow, and truly wonderful are the feats recorded of his performance in after-times. The least meritorious of these exploits would, if duly detailed, produce the exclamation that Ram indeed drew a long bow.' In native tradition, the country hereabouts is called *Bhojepooreah*, or the kingdom of Rajah Bhoja—the great Necromancer-King of India.

Off Buxar, we passed a pleasant night upon the steamer. It was a night for romance, such as when 'Troilus sighed his soul to absent Cressida.' The moon had a pure, unclouded brightness. The river lay calm and tranquil as the bosom of innocence, and the gentle rippling of the water against the sides of the vessel

made a lullaby to the ears, that brought on a refreshing sleep to digest a hearty dinner. Early next morning, the *Agra* weighed its anchor, and went paddling on to *Ghazipore*. Reached this town at three in the afternoon, and there was no more sailing that day on account of a telegram from Calcutta.

Many a time did we wish to see the town, that, says Heber, 'is celebrated throughout India for the wholesomeness of its air, and the beauty and extent of its rose gardens.' If, at last, an opportunity happened to gratify our wishes, it was only for the short space of three hours, during which no man can be sufficiently influenced to form his opinion of the salubrity or insalubrity of a place. It is not for us either to confirm or contradict the wholesomeness of the air of Ghazipore, in our stroll through that town for a couple of hours we did not taste any extra-bland airs followed by an extra-keenness of appetite, nor did we return from it catching an ague or jungle-fever. As for the famous rose gardens, the greatest of all curiosities at Ghazipore, where one may fancy himself in the reality of Sadi's Gulistan midst flowers and flowering shrubs, and where, as we have been told by one from personal experience, the opening of the countless buds is distinctly audible in the stillness of an evening; they were at a distance which made us very much regret missing them. In truth, we would have come away doubting the very existence of these rose-fields that occupy hundreds of acres, had not a number of men come to sell their rose-water, attar, and other perfumed oils at the coaling ghaut of the steamer.

The handsome ruined palace of Nabob Cossim Ali Khan, in the banqueting-hall of which was a 'deep trench, which used to be filled with rose-water when the Nabob and his friends were feasting there,' was also missed by us. Our long-cherished wishes were gratified so far as to find Ghazipore a large town finely situated upon an elevated bank, and surrounded by luxuriant groves. It has a long wide street passing through neat-built bazars. The wares of the shopkeepers were exposed in the stalls, and groups of men nearly blocked up the way —the evening being the busiest time of the day in an Indian city. The European quarter is separated from the native town by gardens and fine turf-lands, scattered with trees and bungalows. The cantonments are in the far western extremity.

Maha-Kosala, the ancient Hindoo name of the district in which Ghazipore is situated, is fertile in corn, pasture, and fruit trees, and its number of inhabitants to the square mile is 500 in the present day. Though an old town, mentioned in the Ayeen Akbarry, Ghazipore possesses no interest from old associations, and has no remains of antiquity. In name, in foundation, and in population, it is a Mahomedan town. Ghazipore is the first large and important town that is met with on the left bank of the Ganges in proceeding up from Rajmahl, and it is the lowest station of the North-Western Presidency.

In Ghazipore sleeps Lord Cornwallis. He had been appointed Governor-General a second time, and was proceeding up the country, when he fell sick on the road, and died at Ghazipore. It was his especial command,

that 'where the tree fell, there it should lie,'—and 'the Marquis, who had seen so many vicissitudes in the West and East, and who had narrowly escaped death at Yorktown in America, and a grave on the banks of the Chesapeake, was buried at Ghazipore, on the banks of the Ganges.' The monument over his remains, says Heber, 'is a costly building of fine freestone, of large proportions, solid masonry, and raised above the ground on a lofty and striking basement. But its pillars, instead of beautiful Corinthian well-fluted, are of the meanest Doric. They are quite too slender for their height, and for the heavy entablature and cornice which rest on them. The dome, instead of springing from nearly the same level with the roof of the surrounding portico, is raised ten feet higher on a most ugly and unmeaning attic story. The building is utterly unmeaning; it is neither a temple nor a tomb, neither has altar, statue, nor inscription. It is, in fact, a "folly" of the same sort, but far more ambitious and costly than that which is built at Barrackpore, and it is vexatious to think that a very handsome church might have been built, and a handsome marble monument to Lord Cornwallis placed in its interior, for a little more money than has been employed on a thing, which, if any foreigner saw, would afford subject for mockery to all who read his travels, at the expense of Anglo-Indian ideas of architecture.' The young trees, spoken of by Heber, have grown high in our day, and the lofty tomb, in which rests the Governor who introduced the Permanent Settlement, does not look quite so ill from the river.

Next day we reached *Benares*—the flag hoisted on the top of the minaret of Aurungzebe's mosque announced the arrival of the steamer to the population of that city, and the bridge of boats allowed us a passage to proceed on our way to *Chunar*.

Perched on the crest of a limestone spur that rises to the height of 150 feet abruptly from the edge of the stream, the fortress of Chunar loomed in the distance, and gradually enlarged on the view, till, coming up and anchoring before the town, it unfolded itself in all its massy proportions to our sight. Well may the Hindoos imagine the dizzy height of the rocky eminence to be a seat of the Almighty. In the whole Gangetic valley, there is not another spot to be compared with Chunar; and its lofty rock, rising in a slip of open woodland washed by the Ganges, could not have failed to attract the notice of the sagacious Hindoo.

Landed to see the fort. It is supposed to have been originally built and resided in by some of the Pal Rajahs of Bengal, and afterwards possessed by the Chundal kings of ancient Mahoba or modern Bundlecund, from whom it has derived the name of *Chundalghur*. Up an easy slope commencing almost from the ghaut we ascended to the fort, which covers the crest and sides of the rock, and rises with several successive enclosures of walls and towers, the lowest of which have their base washed by the Ganges. The site and outline are very noble; the rock on which it stands is perfectly insulated, and, either naturally or by art, bordered on every side by a very awful precipice, flanked, wherever

it has been possible to obtain a salient angle, with towers, bartizans, and bastions of various forms and sizes.' It is told in Hindoo tradition that the fort of Chunar was built in one night by a giant, and is impregnable. There is as much truth in the former as in the latter, which has been tested and shaken many a time by Baber, Homayoon, Shere Shah, and the English. In its present state, the fort retains little or none of its ancient Hindoo or Mussulman features. The ramparts are mounted with a good many cannon. To check the advance of an assaulting army, the fort is stored with great numbers of stone cylinders, much like garden rollers, to set them rolling down the steep face of the hill upon the enemy.

The top of the rock forms a considerable and pretty space, covered with fine grass, and scattered with noble spreading trees. The paths beautiful, and bungalows neat. Warren Hastings fled here from Benares during the Cheyte Sing insurrection, and we were shown the house in which he lived. The military importance of Chunar has passed away, and it is occupied now chiefly by invalids and 'old weather-beaten' soldiers. Bishop Heber saw here an 'European soldier who fought with Clive, and had no infirmity but deafness and dim sight.' The view from the ramparts is excellent, and the prospect round Chunar bears that English character which reminds an invalid resident of 'sweet, sweet home.' There is a narrow and crooked flight of steps descending from the top of the rock, and ending in a little postern-gate, that lets out into the river. It was

said by the guide to be the work of an ancient Hindoo Rajah. The steamer lying in the river appeared from the top to be diminished into a small low vessel, almost on a level with the surface of the waters, and scarcely raising up its head.

In the fortress of Chunar is a state-prison in which Trimbukjee Danglia pined away his last days, hopeless of ever being able to give a second slip to his enemies. He had been first kept in custody at the fortress of Tannah, near Bombay. But a Mahratta groom, who seems to have purposely taken service under the commanding officer, became the instrument to facilitate the means for his escape. The stable where the groom used to attend his horse was immediately under the window of Trimbukjee's prison. He paid more than usual attention to his steed, and indulged, while currying and cleaning the animal, in the following Mahratta song:—

'Behind the bush the bowmen hide,
The horse beneath the tree;
Where shall I find a knight will ride
The jungle paths with me?
There are five-and-fifty coursers there,
And four-and-fifty men;
When the fifty-fifth shall mount his steed,
The Deccan thrives again!'

The dark innuendos conveyed in the ballad fell unheeded upon the ears of the uninterested, and were understood only by Trimbukjee, who was at last found to have disappeared from his dungeon, with both the groom and horse from the stable. Nearly in the same manner had Sevajee made his escape from the hands of Aurungzebe by concealing himself in a large basket of sweet-meats;

and it is singular to remark that the history of the Mahratta power is comprised between two escapes—that of Sevajee, which led to its foundation, and that of Trimbukjee, which led to its dissolution. The slippery Trimbukjee was caught a second time, and lodged in the fortress of Chunar. 'He is confined with great strictness,' says Heber, 'having an European as well as a Sepoy guard, and never being trusted out of the sight of the sentries. Even his bed-chamber has three grated windows open into the verandah which serves as a guard-room. In other respects he is well treated, has two large and very airy apartments, a small building fitted up as a pagoda, and a little garden shaded with a peepul-tree, which he has planted very prettily with balsams and other flowers. Four of his own servants are allowed to attend him, but they are always searched before they quit or return to the fort, and must always be there at night. He is a little, lively, irritable-looking man, dressed, when I saw him, in a dirty cotton mantle, with a broad red border, thrown carelessly over his head and shoulders. I was introduced to him by Colonel Alexander, and he received me courteously, observing that he himself was a Brahmin, and in token of his brotherly regard, plucking some of his prettiest flowers for me. He then showed me his pagoda and garden, and after a few common-place expressions of the pleasure I felt in seeing so celebrated a warrior, which he answered by saying, with a laugh, he should have been glad to make my acquaintance *elsewhere*, I made my bow and took leave. He has been now, I believe, five years in

prison, and seems likely to remain there during life, or till his patron and tool, Baja Row, may lessen his power of doing mischief. He has often offered to give security to any amount for his good behaviour, and to become a warmer friend to the Company than he has ever been their enemy, but his applications have been vain. He attributes, I understand, their failure to Mr Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, who is, he says, "his best friend, and his worst enemy," the faithful trustee of his estate, treating his children with parental kindness, and interesting himself in the first instance to save his life, but resolutely fixed on keeping him in prison, and urging the Supreme Government to distrust all his protestations. His life must now be dismally monotonous and wearisome. Though a Brahmin of high caste, and so long a minister of state and the commander of armies, he can neither write nor read, and his whole amusement consists in the ceremonies of his idolatry, his garden, and the gossip which his servants pick up for him in the town of Chunar.' Avarice seems at present his ruling passion. He is a very severe inspector of his weekly accounts, and one day set the whole garrison in an uproar about some ghee which he accused his khansamah of embezzling; in short, he seems less interested with the favourable reports which he from time to time receives of his family, than with the banking accounts by which they are accompanied. 'Much as he is said to deserve his fate, as a murderer, an extortioner, and a grossly perjured man, I hope I may be allowed to pity him.'

Proofs of the Hindoo antiquity of Chunar are seen on the highest point of the rock. They consist of an old Hindoo palace, which has a dome in the centre, and several vaulted apartments, with many remains of carving and painting. These chambers are dark and low, being purposely so built to exclude heat. On one side of this antique palace is a loftier and more airy building, with handsome rooms and carved oriel windows, which was formerly the residence of the Mussulman governor. There is an extraordinary well, about fifteen feet in diameter, and sunk to a very great depth in the solid rock. The ancient Hindoo or Mussulman state-prison is observed to consist of four small round holes, just large enough for a man to pass through, and leading to a subterranean dungeon, forty feet square, without any light or air. In a small square court, entered by a rusty iron door in a rugged and ancient wall, and under an old overshadowing peepul-tree, is a large black marble slab, which is said to be the spot where the Almighty is seated personally, but invisibly, for nine hours of the day, spending the other three hours at Benares, during which interval the rock ceases to be impregnable to an enemy. Tradition states this temple to contain 'a chest which cannot be opened, unless the party opening it lose his hand—four thieves having so suffered once, in an attempt on it.'

From the fort we went to the native town, which has houses all of stone, many of which are two-storied and verandahed. In the shops were exposed very fine black and red glazed earthenware, for which this

place is famous. Chunar is noted also for its finest tobacco.

The rail from Chunar to *Mirzapore* passes through a rugged hilly and woody country. Baber mentions it to have been infested by the wild elephant, tiger, and rhinoceros. Now, the region is haunted only by wolves, and, in rare instances, by bears. Many of the quarries, which from a remote period have been worked for buildings at Ghazipore, Benares, Chunar, Mirzapore, and almost the whole neighbourhood, are seen in the range of rocks along the foot of which the rail runs in a parallel. They have been quarried for ages, and whole towns have been built of their stones, but still no sensible diminution is marked in their size.

Reached Mirzapore. The long line of neat stone-ghauts covering a steep bank, the vast number of richly-carved temples and pagodas, the handsome native houses, the elegant gardens and bungalows, and the thick crowd of boats of all descriptions, present an appearance of grandeur that rivals Benares, and indicates the opulence possessed by the largest and richest mart of traffic in the centre of Hindoostan. Mirzapore has no ancient importance or renown like Rajmahal, Bhaugulpore, Monghyr, Patna, Benares, but, excepting the last, it has eclipsed all the towns and cities in the Gangetic valley. It is not mentioned in the Ayeen Akbarry. Tieffenthaler describes it as 'a mart having two ghauts giving access to the Ganges.' It is laid down on Rennel's map published in 1781, but not mentioned in the accounts of the march of the British army from Buxar to Allahabad.

Mirzapore has grown and prospered under English rule within the memory of living man, and as a mart of trade ranks next to the metropolis. Here is exposed for sale the corn, the cotton, and the dyes of one-sixth of India. Here, in the warehouses, are collected cloth-goods and metals for the consumption of near fifty millions of men. Here are manufactured various goods and the richest carpets. Bankers and merchants from all parts of Hindoostan and Central India are located here for business. The enterprising and thrifty Marwaree is attracted here, and returns home a rich man. The Bengalee, too, is in this great field of speculation and competition. There is no town in India which has risen like Mirzapore purely from commercial causes, unconnected with religion or the auspices of royalty. Much as Mirzapore has grown and flourished, it is destined to quadruple in population, wealth, and splendour, on the opening of the rail to Bombay.

In Mirzapore is seen the most beautiful *chouk* of all in India. The large square is enclosed by ranges of high stone-buildings, from which project elegant balconies over-hanging the market-place on all sides. There is also a superb *serai*. From a noisome tank, it has become a commodious accommodation for several hundred travellers, with towers at the corners, and a well and shrubbery in the centre. This has been built at the expense of a benevolent native lady.

Four miles from Mirzapore is the *Temple of Bindachul*. Here is seen the only instance of Kali in Hindoostan, who is the goddess of thugs and robbe

Her shrine is on the brow of a solitary hill, where murders were very conveniently committed without transpiring to the public. It is said, that '250 boats of river thugs, in crews of fifteen, used to ply between Benares and Calcutta, five months every year, under the pretence of conveying pilgrims—their victims' back was broken, and the corpse was thrown into the river.'

From Mirzapore to Allahabad, for an account of which the reader is referred to following pages.

CHAPTER III.

THE tale of our journey opens with all the pomp and circumstance of an Eastern romance. Our party was composed of four,—dear reader. But, instead of the prince, the minister, the commander, and the merchant, you must be content with the less conspicuous characters of the doctor, the lawyer, the scholar, and the tradesman. All the charm of a resemblance lies only in the beginning. The story then professes to be something more serious than the tale of an Indian nursery, which induces the very opposite of what is aimed at here—to help the reader to keep awake to the interest of the scenes and sights about him.

Friday, the 19th of October, 1860, was the day appointed for our departure. Crossing over to Howrah, we engaged passage for Burdwan. The train started at 10 A.M., and we fairly proceeded on our journey. Surely, our ancient Bhagiruth, who brought the Ganges from heaven, is not more entitled to the grateful remembrance of posterity, than is the author of the Railway in India.

Travelling by the Rail very much resembles migrating in one vast colony, or setting out together in a whole moving town or caravan. Nothing under this enormous load is ever tagged to the back of a locomotive, and yet we were no sooner in motion than Calcutta, and the Hooghly, and Howrah, all began to recede away like the scenes in a Dissolving View.

The first sight of a steamer no less amazed than alarmed the Burmese, who had a tradition that the capital of their empire would be safe, until a vessel should advance up the Irrawady without *oars* and *sails!* Similarly does the Hindoo look upon the Railway as a marvel and miracle—a novel incarnation for the regeneration of Bharat-versh.

The fondness of the Bengalee for an in-door life is proverbial. He out-Johnsons Johnson in cockneyism. The Calcutta Baboo sees in the Chitpoor Road the same 'best highway in the world,' as did the great English Lexicographer in the Strand of London. But the long vista, that is opening from one end of the empire to the other, will, in a few years, tempt him out-of-doors to move in a more extended orbit, to enlarge the circle of his terrene acquaintance, to see variety in human nature, and to divert his attention from the species Calcutta-wallah to the genus man. The fact has become patent, that which was achieved in months and days is now accomplished in hours and minutes, and celerity is as much the order of the day as security and saving.

The iron-horse of the 19th century may be said to

have realized the Pegasus of the Greeks, or the Pukaraj of the Hindoos. It has given tangibility and a type to an airy nothing, and has reduced fancy to a matter-of-fact. The introduction of this great novelty has silenced Burke's reproach, 'that if the English were to quit India, they would leave behind them no memorial of art or science worthy of a great and enlightened nation.'

From Howrah to Bally the journey now-a-days is one of five minutes. In twice that time one reaches to Serampore. The next station is Chandernagore—thence to Chinsurah, and then on to Hooghly and Muggra. The Danes, the Dutch, the French, the Portuguese, and the English, all settling at these places in each other's neighbourhood, once presented the microcosm of Europe on the banks of the Hooghly.

All along the road the villages still turn out to see the progress of the train, and gaze in ignorant admiration at the little world borne upon its back.

Nothing so tedious as a twice-told tale—nothing so insipid as a repeated dish. The story of our journey is, therefore, commenced from *Pundooa*. Once the seat of a Hindoo Rajah, when it was fortified by a wall and trench, five miles in circumference, Pundooa is now a rural town of half its former size. From the train it is seen to peep from amidst groves, orchards, and gardens, surrounding it on all sides, and imparting to it a pleasing sylvan character. Traces of its ancient fortification are yet discernible at places. The tower, 120 feet high, arrests the eye from a long way off. This is

the oldest of all buildings in the plains of Lower Bengal, which has defied the storms and rains of a tropical climate through 500 years. It is striking that mere brick-work can resist the elements for such a long period. Thus standing untouched by time, and uninjured by the weather, the tower is a hoary witness of the events of several ages. It has seen the rise and fall of Dacca, Rajmahal, and Moorshedabad, and still exists. To this day the building is in a very good condition, and promises to outlive many more generations. Outward the surface of the tower has been overlaid with a thick crust of the hoar of ages.

Pundooa is famous for the Battle of the Cow, fought in 1340, A.D. The birth of a long-denied heir to its Rajah had given occasion for a great public fête. There was a Persian translator attached to the Hindoo Court, who too wanted to partake in the jubilee. But the killing of a cow is indispensable to the making of a Mahomedan holiday. Living in a Hindoo town, the Moonshee hesitated between the choice of beef steaks and the wrath of alien townsmen. In an evil moment, his temptation getting the better of his prudence, he decided to slay a cow. Care was taken privately to bury the entrails and bones in an obscure part of the town. But very often does a trifle turn out to blow up a wrong-doer from the fancied security of his precautions. The slaughter of a cow was an extraordinary occurrence in a community of vegetarians and icthyophagists. It did not escape the powerful olfactory of the jackals. Nothing was ever likely to be so little antici-

pated, as that a pack of these quick-scented creatures should happen to be attracted to the spot, and, unsodding the remains of the slaughtered animal, hold their nocturnal carnival, and then leave exposed its bones and skull on the field. Next morning, when *the head and front of the offence* too plainly told its tale, the whole town rose up to a man to demand vengeance. The new-born child, deemed unworthy to live with the blood of kine upon his head, was first sacrificed to appease the manes of the departed quadruped. The hue and cry then followed the Moonshee, who had not reckoned upon his being outwitted and betrayed by jackals. He appealed to the Rajah for protection. But the enormity of his crime left no hopes of mercy from any quarter. Abandoned to his fate, the Moonshee gave the slip to his enemies, and, escaping to his kith and kin, kindled the flames of a war, which, raging for many years, at length terminated in the downfall of the Hindoos.

It is said the place held out so long as the waters of a sacred tank possessed the virtue of restoring life to the fallen soldiers of the Hindoo garrison. But charm was counteracted by charm. A live heifer is more venerated by the Hindoo than the gods of his Triad. But in the shape of meat, it is highest abomination. The Moslems, therefore, played the *ruse* of throwing in a steak of beef, and defiling thereby the sanctity of the tank out of which their opponent drank. No more could the besieged Hindoos touch a drop of its water. The spell was broken that had made them invincible,

and thirst staring them in the face, the screw of their courage got loose, and they gave up the struggle.* This remarkable tank may yet be seen some 200 yards on the west of the town. The site occupied by the present Railway station-house is on the very spot of the battle-field. The spade of the workmen has struck upon many skulls and bones there beneath the turf. Politically, the siege of Pundooa was not less important than the siege of ancient Illion or Lunka—though no rustic Homer or Valmiki has been at pains to commemorate the hapless end of a bovine Bhuggobuttee. In truth it was a desperate struggle for the domination of race over race, and of religion over religion, which ended in the complete triumph of Islam over Hindooism. To this day, there exists a bitter antagonism between the two races at Pundooa, and one is apt to suppose that the ghost of the cow still haunts the place for its unavenged fate.

The tower commemorates the victory of the Islamite. The iron rod running up to its top is verily an anticipation of Franklin's discovery—though Mahomedan credulity should regard it to have been the *walking-stick* of Shah Sufi, the hero of the war. Hard by is his tomb —an object of great sanctity to the Mussulmans of Lower

* Many such instances occur in the history of India, to show how superstition hastened the end of the ancient Hindoo sovereignty. The fall of Balabhipoor, in ancient Saurashtra, was hastened by polluting with the blood of kine the sacred fountain from which arose, at the summons of Rajah Silladitya, the seven-headed horse Septaswa, which draws the car of the sun, to bear him to battle. In a later age, Allaoodeen practised the same *ruse* against the celebrated Achil, the Keeche prince of Gagrown, which caused the surrender of this impregnable fortress. (See Col. Tod's *Rajasthan*, vol. i. page 219.)

Bengal. The mosque is a superb building, two hundred feet long, with sixty domes—a number intended, perhaps, to have preserved an arithmetic correspondence with the threescore Rajahs who fell in the siege.

The *Peer-pukur* at Pundooa is a large tank, forty feet deep, and 500 years old. It has a pretty appearance with the ruined *imambarees* and tombs studding its banks. The most remarkable tenant of this tank is a tame alligator called Fatikhan, which has been taught to obey the call of a fakeer living upon the embankments. On summons the monster shows himself upon the surface, and keeps floating for several minutes. To amuse the spectators, he is called to approach the ghaut, and then ordered to make his exit. But the animal is loath to depart, till a fowl or some other food is thrown to him, when he is content to retire into the depths of the tank. This beats Pliny's elephants dancing the rope-dance, or Queen Berenice's lion dining at her table and licking her cheeks.*

* The Maharajah Sheodan Sing had one day been amusing us with the feats of his youth, his swimming from island to island, and bestriding the alligators for an excursion. There are two of these alligators quite familiar to the inhabitants of Oodipoor, who come when called 'from the vasty deep' for food, and I have often exasperated them by throwing an inflated bladder, which the monsters greedily received, only to dive away in angry disappointment.' (Col. Tod, vol. i. page 648.) Captain Von Orlich saw thirty alligators in a tank near Kurrachee, who, at the call of the fakeer, 'instantly crept out of the water, and like so many dogs lay in a semi-circle at the feet of their master.' The art of taming and training beasts and birds has been practised in India from a long antiquity. Talking-birds were common in the age of Menu, who advises a king to hold his council in a place from which such birds are to be carefully removed. The ancient Greek writers mention that, in the festive pro-

The Pundooa of Bengal history is not to be confounded with the Pundooa under notice. The latter seems to have either given its name to, or derived it from, the place where Sultan Shumsoodeen Bengara removed the seat of Government from Gour in 1350, and where his son and successor Secunder built a superb mosque in 1360 A.D. The two places flourished nearly at the same time.*

Past hurrying on by *Boinchi*. The mere glimpse caught of its dense mass of buildings and huts is enough to give an idea of its populous and thriving character. Fifty years ago, no such rural prosperity met the eye of the traveller passing through these regions. Then a brick-house dared not pop up its head in such an obscure provincial town. The well-doing burgher was sure to have betrayed himself to the dacoits. To this day, the country gentleman does not neglect the precaution of fortifying his house with a high wall, and nailing the doors of his gate with huge nails to resist

cessions of the Hindoos, 'tame lions and panthers formed a part of the show to which singing birds, and others remarkable for their plumage, were also made to contribute sitting on trees, which were transported on large waggons, and increased the variety of the scene.' The magpie plays an important part in the drama of the Rutnavali, as does the *Nari-sook* in the Bhagbut. Such were the public amusements of the generations who knew not anything of idolatry to adorn their processions. Very probably it was from the Indians that the Romans borrowed many of their games in the Circus and Amphitheatre. The wild-beast fights of the Mogul emperors were but a revival of the ancient Hindoo diversions. To this day those diversions survive in the bulbul-fights and ram-fights of our countrymen, in the teaching of parrots and magpies to utter the names of Radha and Krishna, and in the artificial mountains, trees, and gardens, forming a part of our nuptial processions.

* See Stewart's History of Bengal.

the battering of the *dhekye.* The stair-cases in his zenana are all made to end in trap-doors. On his roof are piles of stones kept in readiness to crush the marauder who might venture to assail the little garrison. But no man now dares to defy the authority of law. The humblest individual is now assured of protection by the State in the possession of what is earned by his diligence, or hoarded by his self-denial. There are few subjects to which the attention of our provincial gentry is so urgently needed to be turned now as the sanitation of their townships—a subject important for its results in the physical history of a nation. The lapse of three thousand years has not suggested one improvement on the principles of town-building laid down by old Menu. Drainage there is none in the topography of a Hindoo town or village. The roads are mere foot-paths, traversable at the best by a single draft bullock. Bowers and gardens are indeed important in rural housekeeping. But the axe should level all that riots and rots—all that hinders ventilation, sunshine, and evaporation. The gloomy orchard is no longer wanted to shelter the householder overtaken by dacoits. Tanks and ponds are the best features in an Indian village, and their ghauts often form the gayest scenes in a village life. But out of twenty such public reservoirs, fifteen are mere cess-pools which poison the air of the village by their stench and malaria.

It is remarkable in all Hindoo towns and villages to see the low-castes occupy everywhere only the outskirts and live in small low wigwams. The hatred of the an-

cient Sudra is now borne against the modern Bagdees and Domes. To be at quits, the Bagdees and Domes retaliate upon their aristocratic neighbours by nightly thefts and burglaries. They cannot but choose thus to live at the expense of the community. Depredation naturally becomes the vocation of those who are excluded from all social intercourse and legitimate source of gain, and to whom no incentive is left for honourable distinction in society. Owing to this baneful excommunication, crime has become normal to low life in India, and gang-robbery prevalent from times beyond the age of the Institutes. The hereditary robber, too, deems to have his own prestige, and is slowly weaned from the ancestral habits grown into a second nature. Though better days have dawned, and the gangs have been completely broken up, still there is many a sturdy fellow who neither digs, nor weaves, nor joins wood for his livelihood, and who has no ostensible means of living. Very often does such a chap happen to be seen to smoke squatting before the doorway of his hut, and to cast wistful glances at the passing train, with 'a lurking devil in his eye.'

From Boinchi the way lies through a fine open country, every inch of which is under cultivation. On either hand the eye wanders over one sheet of waving corn-fields, and orchards, and gardens of plantain and sugar-cane. Here and there are little meadows enlivened by cattle. Near the horizon the prospect seems to be closed in a gloomy jungle. But the traveller draws near, and is agreeably surprised to find it a nar-

row belt of villages teeming with population. The scene is repeated, and again does the seeming jungle turn out to be a thick mass of the habitations of men; and so on, the deception is carried for several miles in succession.

Six miles interior to the right of the station-house at *Batka* is Davipoor. The Kali, to whom the village is indebted for its name, is a fierce Amazonian statue, seven feet high, and quite terror-striking to the beholder. The opulent family of the Singhees have adorned their native village with a lofty pagoda, which is much to the credit of the rural masons. From the Rail the crest of this temple is faintly descried near the horizon. Personally to us the place shall always be memorable for a cobra eating up a whole big cat.

The locomotive quickens in its pace by the turn of a peg similarly to the horse of the Indian in Scheherzade's tale; and it goes on and on quite 'like a pawing steed.' Passed *Mamaree*,—a pretty village with many brick buildings, and a fine *nuhoruttun*, or nine-pinnacled Hindoo temple. The beautiful country, the invigorating air, the rich prospect of cultivation for miles, the rapid succession of villages, the innumerable tanks and fish-ponds, the swarming population, and the numerous monuments of art and industry peculiar to Indian society, tell the traveller that he has entered the district of Burdwan—the district which for salubrity, fertility, populousness, wealth, and civilization, is the most reputed in Bengal. Burdwan, Bishenpoor, and Beerbhoom, were the three great Hindoo Rajdoms in the

tract popularly known under the name of Raur. That of Burdwan has alone survived, and is contemplated with a far deeper interest than the other two. Though sacked and pillaged many a time, the industry, intelligence, and number of its people, have as often covered the face of the land with wealth. Nowhere in our province is ancient capital so much hoarded. Out of the wealth annually created by its population, Burdwan pays the largest revenue of all the zillahs in Bengal. The Banka, winding in serpentine meanders, adds that 'babbling brook' to 'the pomp of groves' and 'the garniture of fields,' which completes the charming variety of this well-known tract. The grand Railway viaduct, half a mile long, is an architectural wonder in the valley of the Damoodur. It is a bridle curbing that river notorious for its impetuosity.* Our journey

* Hardly any reader needs to be informed of the sudden rises to which the Damoodur is subject during the periodic rains. One of the most severe inundations experienced was in 1823, when this river rose higher than ever it had done in the recollection of the oldest inhabitant, and overflowed the country for many miles. All the embankments were overtopped and carried away, and scarcely a trace of them was left. In many places the face of the country was entirely changed. The sites of fine villages, tanks, and gardens, were converted into a level plain of sand. The ground on which the crops stood became a desert in a few hours, and unfit for future cultivation by the sand with which it was overlaid. There had been five feet of water in the streets of Burdwan. The Curri, Banka, and Damoodur were united, and a sheet of water, more than 6 miles in breadth, and 3 or 4 feet in depth, flowed over the country eastward towards Culna, and across the Hooghly. The devastation was overwhelming, and the loss of lives was not much less than the loss of property. In many places the inhabitants were carried off, a few only being saved by floating on the roofs of huts, or perching upon trees. Those that escaped thus, escaped only with their lives. In that inundation, a good-sized pinnace sailed through the Sooksagur bazar. Chinsurah and Chanderuagore were laid under water. A *rut* or car had floated

for the day now neared its end, and all eyes were turned to greet the view of *Burdwan*. In a little time the sight of distant steeples and temples made itself welcome to the travellers, and before the little second-hand of a watch had thrice gone the round of its circle, we alighted on the classic soil of Burdwan. Soondra had accomplished a journey of six months in six days, we have accomplished a journey of three days in three hours—a proof of science rivalling the speed of the poet's fancy.

Travellers have hardly done justice to Burdwan, the reality of which exceeds all that is chanted in ballad or song. In all directions the scenery fully justifies its ancient poetical appellation of Koosumapoor, or the city of Flora. The very walks leading to the town lie through a succession of groves, orchards, gardens, and flower-pots; and Bharutchunder's

Burdwan, maha sthan
Chow de ka ta, poospho ban

is true to the very letter. The tanks on all sides, and the constant processions of women, with pitchers of water on their waists, fully realize the ghaut-scene of that poet. There was a thin cloud over the sky, and the murky day, and the gentle breaths of air, well chimed with the softest landscapes and the softest recollections. The Banka flows its crystal stream right

down to Calcutta, and stranded at the ghaut which has since been called the Rut-tollah ghaut. The *bunding* system, maintained for many years at a great cost, has been abandoned, and the country is left to be raised by a silting process. No serious rise has taken place since the erection of the Railway.

through the town. Though its bed now is almost a mere waste of sand, the place is not a whit less poetical without the Naiades.

Place aids the effect of poetry, and in Burdwan we go back in imagination to the days of Biddya and Soondra, and think more of old Beersingha than of the present Maharajah. The man who can feel no emotions in the scene of their adventures and the land of Noor Jehan's sojourn—who can ignore the place, the name of which is associated with the Kobi-kun-kun, and the early anecdotes of Rammohun Roy, must thank his stars to have not a grain of romance or enthusiasm in his composition. The love-adventures of Biddya and Soondra have all the improbability of fiction mingled with the truth of fact—all the romance of Mojunu and Leila, with the reality of Eloisa and Abelard. But the *liaison* is told with all the barefacedness of a rake; and Bharutchunder's Biddya, and Calidas' Sacontola, are beings of antipodal difference. 'Wilt thou express in one word,' says Goethe, 'the bloom of the Spring and the fruit of the Autumn—all that attracts and entrances—all that feeds and satisfies—the Heaven itself and the Earth? I name thee, Sacontola!—and it is done.'* By the side of the pure and guileless Sacontola, how little there is of the platonic, and how much of the

* This has been put into rhyme by Professor Eastwick, and cited by Professor Monier Williams in his recent translation of the play of Sacontola.

'Wouldst thou the young year's blossoms and the fruits of its decline,
And all by which the soul is charmed, enraptured, feasted, fed—
Wouldst thou the earth and heaven itself in one sole name combine?
I name thee, O Sacontola! and all at once is said.'

practical, in the character of Biddya. The poet ought to have been aware that 'drapery is more alluring than exposure, and that the imagination is more powerfully moved by delicate hints than by gross descriptions.' He has made Biddya to sit for the picture of a modern lady of Bengal, and has taken no pains to sustain her character by high sentiments becoming an accomplished princess. His tale has all the inebriating lusciousness of the grape, and is therefore eagerly drunk in by the multitude. But the poison swallowed is in no long time rejected with a nausea.

By the learned native public of Bengal the story of Biddya and Soondra is thought to be without an iota of truth in it. The tale was undertaken at the request of the Rajahs of Kishnagur, to level a squib at the rival house of Burdwan, with all the spice of romantic interest. But the Veronese no more insist on the fact of Juliet's story, than do the Burdwanese cling to the memory of Biddya, and embalm it in their household traditions. They show in Verona Juliet's tomb in a wild and desolate garden, attached to a convent.* In Burdwan they show you the site of Biddya's house, her favourite pond, and the Kali of her father's household.

* 'I have been over Verona. The amphitheatre is wonderful—beats even Greece. Of the truth of Juliet's story, they seem tenacious to a degree, insisting on the fact, giving a date (1303), and showing a tomb. It is a plain, open, and partly decayed sarcophagus, with withered leaves in it, in a wild and desolate conventual garden, once a cemetery, now ruined to the very graves. The situation struck me as very appropriate to the legend, being blighted as their love. I have brought away a few pieces of granite, to give to my daughter and my nieces.'—*Byron's Letters, Nov.* 9, 1816.

Biddyapotta, or 'the local habitation' of Biddya, is first of all pointed out to give the lie to the opinion of her being a myth. There is now nothing more of this precious abode, than a trace of some rubbish; fully doubtful, but looking sufficiently antique. Near it, on a spot, are shown the faded marks of some ancient excavation, said to indicate the subterranean passage through which Soondra used to make his way *incognito* into the chambers of the princess. Further on a little gap in the earth is pretended to be one of the mouths of that famous passage. The place has silted up, and paddy is grown, where the princess 'lived, and moved, and had her being.' The whereabouts of the other mouth is quite unknown; and to the regret of all Indian *Cavaliers*, the site of Heera's cottage is beyond all possibility of identification.

Certainly, the vulnerable point in Bharutchunder's tale is that about the subterranean passage. In this sceptical age it is at once reckoned among the *extraordinaries*, and exclaimed at by the reader, 'Well, mole, coulds't thou work i' the earth so fast.' Tradition may point out its local site, and allude to its local existence three hundred years ago, when Rajah Maun Sing, in his vice-regal tour through Bengal, stopped at Burdwan, and visited the remarkable tunnel. The practicableness of its execution may receive a countenance from the mining operations at Raneegunge, and the caves of Ellora and Elephanta may remove every doubt as to the engineering skill of the ancient Hindoos. But a tunnel, however common now, was an extraordinary undertak-

ing in that age. Unless we chose to regard that lovers' feats are miracles to men of sober-mindedness, there should be no hesitation as to the subterranean passage through which Soondra carried on his stealthy interviews with the princess, having existed more in the imagination of the poet than in reality.

The *Maun-surrobur* is next shown. It is said to have been used by the princess for her ablutions. Once, it seems to have been a splendid tank, but is now a shallow piece of water, divided by the Grand Trunk road into two sections. The surface forms a charming bed of the Indian lily. In one division, the flowers are white, in the other violet—making a pleasing contrast by their variety. The bee hovers and hums his ditty over the flowers. Both the lily and the bee are in harmony with the soft reminiscences of the spot. But from Biddyapotta to the Maun-surrobur the distance is more than a mile. Unless Beersing's palace had covered all this space, the identity of that tank is very much to be doubted. The name of the tank is also significant of its origin from Raja Maun, who may have left it to denote the beneficence of his administration.

The third proof is furnished by the *Mushan*, whither Soondra had been led for execution. The site of that spot was identified by the self-same Kali, at whose altar that Prince was to have been immolated. She now bears the name of Doorlubba Thacreen, from the place of her abode. Situated in the open and lonely fields—where it is little frequented by men, and haunted as it were by ghosts and apparitions, the spot bears out the

truth of the poet's description. The image is of a small size, carved out on a slab of stone. Underneath the figure is an obsolete inscription, which sufficiently exculpates it from being a sculptural fraud and forgery of a recent date. It also serves to lend a colour of truth to her pretensions of being as old as Beersingha—and the *bonâ fide* goddess, who has eaten the poojah of that Rajah, received the votive offerings of Biddya, and heard the prayers of Soondra. If really such, she ought herself to act as the umpire between those beings and the sceptics of the nineteenth century.

No decisive conclusion can be arrived at as to the truth or fictitiousness of Bharutchunder's tale—'much may be said on both sides of the question.' But to save trouble, grant that Biddya was a character of historic authenticity. Her epoch, then, may be fixed somewhere between the eighth and eleventh centuries—a period tallying with that, during which the Chola Princes held a powerful sovereignty in Southern India, and had their capital at Kanchipoor or modern Conjeveram, whence Soondra came. There was in that age a considerable intercourse between the Coromandel Coast and the Gangetic valley. It is mentioned in the Periplus that 'large vessels crossed the Bay of Bengal to the mouth of the Ganges.' In the days of Asoca, voyages were made across the Bay from Ceylon in seven days—such as the modern mail steamers perform now. Soondra may have come up in a clipper vessel of his time—there is at least some truth in the speed of his journey. Beersingh may have belonged to a collateral branch of the ancient

Gunga-vansa Rajahs. The neighbouring Rajah of Bishenpoor traces back his ancestry for a thousand years.

Old Burdwan is now called the *Nabobhaut.* Here flourished the ancient Hindoo Rajahs. Here ruled the Mussulman Chiefs. Here encamped the Rajahs Maun Sing and Toder Mull. Here was Mocoondoram's house. Here Azeem Ooshaun built a mosque—and here was paid down to him by the English the purchase-money of 'Sutanatty, Govindpore, and Calicottah.' Hardly a relic exists of these times.

Shere Afkun, the mightiest name in the annals of sportsmanship, whose pugilistic victory over an enormous tiger is a recorded fact in Mogul history, a fact throwing Gordon Cumming into the shade,—lies buried here far away from the place of his birth in Turkomania. Never was the poet's decree—that 'none but the brave deserves the fair'—more remarkably exemplified than in the instance of Shere Afkun, whose most extraordinary bravery had been rewarded with the hand of the most extraordinary beauty of the age—the future Noor Jehan.

The Sivalaya in old Burdwan consists of 108 temples, in two large amphitheatrical circles, one within the other. The old Rajbaree is at this place. There is an impression that large hoards of money are buried in this house. The exact spot, however, is unknown. A predecessor of the present Rajah had attempted to dig up the hoards. But only wasps, hornets, and serpents issued from the earth. This is giving but another ver-

sion to the old story of the 'burrowing ants' of Herodotus, and the 'Hamakars' or gold-makers of Menu. The 'diggings' in Bengal are not less terrible than in California. Nothing less than the Rajah's life appeased the Yaesha guarding the treasures. The danger attending the excavation has deterred from all further operations of the kind.

Beersingha's line has become extinct for several generations. The present family is said to be descended from an emigrant merchant of Lahore. Though without any relationship with the preceding line, the present family, it is told, long smarted under Bharatchunder's keen and brilliant satire. It was strictly forbidden for many years to be enacted on a festival in any part of their Rajdom.

The Maharajah is all in all in Burdwan. He is the oldest and wealthiest Zemindar in Bengal, and keeps a state resembling that of a petty sovereign. His mansion is a palatial building, and superbly adorned with mirrors and chandeliers. His summer-house is decorated with a regal splendour. He possesses a vast store of gold and silver plate, a rich wardrobe of shawls, brocades, and jewellery. These are displayed to lend a princely magnificence to his birth-day balls and banquets. His Highness has a large stable of horses and elephants, an excellent dairy, and aviary. The favourite amusements of the present Rajah are architecture and gardening. He is taxed for carrying them to an excess. The appointed architects of his household are employed throughout the year in building and rebuilding; the

upholsterers in furnishing and re-furnishing; and the songsters in giving new versions and cadences to their songs. The *Khetrya* of Menu is an extinct animal like the Mammoth. On this side of Bengal, however, the species is boasted to be perpetuated by the proprietor to the rich estates of Burdwan.

Half the town appears to be covered by tanks. The largest of them, *Kristoshair*, is almost an artificial lakelet. Two women once swam across this tank—neither for love nor lucre—but betting only a seer of confectionery. They might have thrown the gauntlet to old Leander. The high embankments of the tank look like the ramparts of a fortress,—the more so for being mounted with a pair of guns, though to all appearance they are as obsolete as the old English alphabet.

In the evening to the *Dilkhoosa-baug*—a pleasant lounge. The principal attraction in it is the menagerie. The pair of lions there staggers the orthodox Hindoo in his belief of the unity of the king of the forest. In Brahminical zoology, the species lion has no mate and multiplication. He is a single and solitary animal in the creation. But instead of one, the number found here is dual—a male and a female. From dual the beasts have made themselves into plural, by multiplying young ones some half a dozen in number. The lion also is an invisible creature according to the Poorans. But the old fellow is so great an aristocrat, as to make himself something more than merely visible to the human eye, by spouting urine at the crowds of spectators gathered to disturb his imperial humour. The

brutes paired together, are observed to dally for twenty-four hours—quite in the fashion of Oriental kings—making their day live long in confinement. No goddess rides upon them to bless the vision of a Sacto. Nothing like a practical contradiction to the fallacies of priestcraft. The outlandish lion betrays the foreign origin of Doorga, who is probably a modified type of the Egyptian Ken—borrowed in the days of ancient Indo-Egyptian intercourse, and adopted by Pooranic idolatry to counteract the prevalence of Buddhism.

More than half the income of the Maharajah appears to be expended upon *Devalayas*, or institutions of idolatry, made the medium of charity to the poor. In this way is squandered nearly one-tenth of the annual income of the Hindoos in Bengal. But the nation is imbibing more enlarged sentiments of benevolence; and Hindoo philanthropy and public spirit, hitherto confined to relieving only the physical wants of individuals, have begun to endow schools and colleges, and 'transmute money into mind.' There is to come a time, when idols shall disappear from the land, and the lapse of idol trusts shall form a puzzle to jurists and legislators.

CHAPTER IV.

October 20th.—LEFT Burdwan for Raneegunge. The train goes on careering upon the terra-firma as merrily as does a ship upon the sea. In it, a Hindoo is apt to feel the prophecies of the sage verified in the Rail—riding upon which has arrived the Kulkee Avatar of his Shasters, for the regeneration of the world.

Little or no change as yet in the scenery about us. The same vegetation, the same paddy-fields, the same sugar-cane plantations, the same topes of bamboos and mangoes, and the same dark bushy villages fringing the horizon, meet the eye in all directions. The botany of Burdwan hardly exhibits any difference from the botany of Hooghly or Calcutta. But the atmosphere at once tells as bracing, and cool, and free from damp. The soil, too, shows a partial change—the soft alluvium has begun to cease, and in its place occurs the gravelly *kunkur*. The country is no more a dead flat, it has begun to rise, and the surface is broken in those slight undulations that indicate the first and farthest commencement of the far-off hills.

The track of our progress then lay skirting the edge of the district of Beerbhoom—the *mulle bhoomee* of the

ancient Hindoos. Mankur is yet an insignificant town, and Paneeghur still more poor-looking. Lying thus far in the interior, these places were once 'out of humanity's reach.' This was, when a journey to these far away, and almostt hermetically-sealed, regions, exposed the traveller to 'disastrous chances' and 'moving accidents'—to the perils of the Charybdis of wild beasts, or to the Scylla of thugs and marauders. Way-faring was then inevitable from way-laying. Highwaymen in squads infested the roads, and had their appointed haunts to lie in wait, spring upon a stray and benighted pedestrian, and fling his warm corpse into a neighbouring tank or roadside jungle. The very men of the police, in those days, laid aside their duties after dark, and acted as banditti. But, under the auspices of the Rail, towns and cities are springing up amidst the desert and upon the rock,—and security of life and property is pervading the length and breadth of the land. Less danger now befalls a man on the road than what threatened him within his own doors in the early part of the century. Hercules of old turned only the course of a river. The Rail turns the courses of men, merchandise, and mind, all into new channels. 'Of all inventions,' says Macaulay, 'the alphabet and the printing press alone excepted, those inventions which abridge distance have done most for the civilization of our species. Every improvement of the means of locomotion benefits mankind morally and intellectually, as well as materially, and not only facilitates the interchange of the various productions of nature and art,—

but tends to remove national and provincial antipathies, and to bind together all the branches of the great human family.'

Beyond Panceghur, the district begins to savour of the jungle. The traveller here enters upon a new order of things, and meets with a new regime in nature. First from the damp, and then from the dry, he has now attained a region which is decidedly sterile. No luxuriant vegetation to denote a soft locality—no other tree of an alluvial soil than a few straggling palms. The magnificent banyan, and the graceful cocoa, have long bidden their adieu, and now lag far—far behind. The transition is great from fertility to aridity. The soil, hard and kunkerry, and of a reddish tinge, denoting the presence of iron, is covered chiefly with low jungles and thin stunted copsewood. The ground is broken into deeper undulations than before—appearing billowy with enormous earthy waves, here leaving a hollow, and there forming a swell with a magnificent sweep.

To carry on the road in a level, they have cut through one of these swells or elevations, to the depth of thirty-six feet, and a mile in length. It is a stupendous work. On the right of this cutting is a gloomy tract of jungles extending to the Rajmahal Hills. In the heart of this desolate region is a romantic spot, wherein the Shivite Brahmins have planted the *linga* of Byjnath—dogging in the steps of the Buddhists to oust them from even their mountain-fastnesses. The god was being brought from Cailasa by Ravana on his shoulders, to act as the

guardian deity of Lunka. But he assumed an immoveable ponderosity by coming in contact with the earth when laid down by Ravana to relieve himself from the hands of Varuna, who had entered his stomach to excite the action of his kidneys, that he may be necessitated to drop the god, and disappointed of his promised deliverance. Thus put up, Byjnath has become a famous pilgrimage. His present shrine is three hundred years old, and a mile in circumference. The god must be content only with our distant salutations.

Out of the cut, the eye meets towards the horizon a faint blue wavy streak, which is a perfect novelty to a *Ditcher*. Soon the dim and indistinct outline assumes the tangible form of detached spurs, and the towering Chutna and Beharinath clearly stand out in view—a welcome sight to him 'who long hath been in populous cities pent.' The land here is 360 feet higher than the level of the sea, and the two spurs are thrown off, like two out-scouts, to announce the beginning of the hills. From Khyrasole commence those coal-beds, which, say the Hindoos, are vestiges of their Marut Rajah's Yugya. By far more rational than this, is the version of the African Barotsees, in whose opinion coals are 'stones that burn.' Near Singarim, the phenomenon of a petrified forest reads a more valuable lecture upon the formation of our planet, than all the cosmogony of Menu. *Raneegunge* is then announced;—and as one stands with his head projected out of the train, the infant town bursts on the sight from out an open and extensive plain, with its white-sheening edifices, the

towering chimneys of its collieries, and the clustering huts of its bazar—looking like a garden in a wilderness, and throwing a lustre over the lonely valley of the Damooder.

From the neighbourhood of the sea, the Rail has transported a whole town of men and merchandise, and set it down at the foot of the hills. The iron-horse also snorts as it goes, and slackens its pace in sight of the terminus of its journey. On arrival, it is unsaddled from its fetters, washed and groomed, and then led away to rest for fresh work on the morrow.

No comfortable lodgings are yet procurable at Raneegunge. The project of a staging caravanserai here might be a profitable speculation, considering the large tide of men that pass through this gateway of Bengal. To an untravelled Calcutta Baboo, this want of accommodation is a serious stumbling-block in the path of his journey. True, there is the Railway Hotel. But a native may read Bacon and Shakespeare, get over his religious prejudices, form political associations, and aspire to a seat in the legislature—he may do all these and many things more, but he cannot make up his mind to board at an English Hotel, or take up a house at Chowringhi. By his nature, a Hindoo is disposed to be in slippers. He feels, therefore, upon stilts before aliens. Ethnologically, he is the same with an Englishman—both being of the Aryan-house. Morally and intellectually, he can easily Anglicize himself. Politically, he may, sooner or later, be raised to an equality. But socially, in thought, habit, action, feelings, and

views of life, he must long measure the distance that exists geographically between him and the Englishman. If not travelling *en grand Seigneur*, a Hindoo gentleman would rather choose to put up in a small shed pervious to the cold drafts of the night wind and the rays of the moon, than be restrained from indulging in the tenor of his habits in a foreign element. It was a lucky thing for us to have picked up the acquaintance of a fellow-Ditcher on the way, who offered us an asylum in his lodge.

Raneegunge is on the confines of a civilized world —beyond commence the inhospitable jungles and the domains of barbarism. Few spots can surpass this in charming scenery and picturesque beauty. On the left tower those spurs which give the first glimpse of the classic Vindhoo-giris. To the right, spread forests terminating as far off as where the Ganges rolls down its mighty stream. Before, is the realm of the hill and dale—wood and jungle. The sky over-head is bright as a mirror. No dust or exhalation bedims the prospect. Through the smokeless atmosphere, the eye kens objects in the far distance. The town itself has a busy and bustling look with its shops, warehouses, and collieries. But it is yet too early to possess any feature of grandeur or opulence. As a new town, Raneegunge should not have been allowed to be built in defiance of those sanitary rules and laws of hygiene, which lengthen the term of human life. The Indians need lessons in town-building, as much as they do in ship-building. The streets here are as narrow, crooked, and dirty, as

in all native towns. The shops are unsightly hovels, crowded together in higgledy-piggledy. Buildings deserving of the name there are none—excepting those of the Railway Company. The population consists of petty shopkeepers, coolies, and other labourers. No decent folk lives here—no permanent settler. The wives and daughters of the Santhals are seen hither from the neighbouring villages to buy salt, clothing, and trinkets. The rural dealers open a bazar under the trees. But after all, the change has been immense from a jungly-waste—from the haunt of bears and leopards into a flourishing seat of trade, yielding annually a quarter of a million. Raneegunge, making rapid advances under the auspices of the Railway, is destined in its progress to rival, if not outstrip, Newcastle. At present it is the only town in India which supplies the nation with mineral wealth—which sends out coals that propel steamers on the Ganges and on the Indian Ocean. Many such towns will rise hereafter to adorn the face of the country, and throw a lustre of opulence over the land. True, agriculture is India's legitimate source of wealth. But her vast mineral resources, once brought to notice, are not likely to be again neglected. Our forefathers were at one time not only the first agricultural, but also the first manufacturing and commercial nation in the world. In the same manner that Manchester now clothes the modern nations, did India clothe the ancient nations with its silks, muslin, and chintz—exciting the alarm of the Roman politicians to drain their empire of its wealth. Steel is

mentioned in the Periplus to have been an article of Indian export. But scarcely is any iron now smelted in the country, and our very nails, and fishing-hooks, and padlocks are imported from England. Ten miles to the north-west of Burdwan, the village of Bonepass was long famous for its excellent cutlery. But the families of its blacksmiths have either died off, or emigrated, or merged into husbandmen. This passing off of the manufactures of our country into foreign hands, is the natural result of unsuccessful competition with superior intelligence and economy. India was the garden and granary of the world, when three-fourths of the globe were a waste and jungle, unutilized as is the interior of Africa. Her relative position has considerably altered, since vast continents have been discovered rivalling her in fertility, and forests have disappeared and gardens spread in every part of the two hemispheres. The nations of the world have abated in their demand for her produce, when America is producing better cotton, Mauritius and Brazil growing cheaper sugar, Russia supplying richer oil-seeds and stronger fibres, Italy and France producing finer silks, Persia growing opium, and Scotland attempting the manufacture of artificial saltpetre. How great is the contrast between the times, when sugar could be procured in England only for medicine, and when her supplies of that article from various ports are now so vast, that she can do without a single pound from India. There was a time, when a pair of silk-stockings, now so commonly used by all classes, constituted a rarity...

in the dress of King Henry VIII. Not two hundred years ago did a member of the House of Commons remark, that 'the high wages paid in this country made it impossible for the English textures to maintain a competition with the produce of the Indian looms.' How in the interval has the state of things been reversed, and the Indian weavers have been thrown out of the market. Day by day is the dominion of mind extending over matter, and the secrets of nature are brought to light to evolve the powers of the soil, and make nations depend upon their own resources. The present native cannot but choose to dress himself in Manchester calico, and use Birmingham hardware. But it is to be hoped that our sons and grandsons will emulate our ancestors to have every *dhooty*, every shirt, and every *pugree* made from the fabrics of Indian cotton manufactured by Indian mill-owners. The present Hindoo is a mere tiller of the soil, because he has no more capital, and no more intelligence, than to grow paddy, oil seeds, and jute. But the increased knowledge, energy, and wealth of the Indians of the twentieth or twenty-first century, would enable them to follow both agriculture and manufactures, to develop the subterranean resources, to open mines and set up mills, to launch ships upon the ocean, and carry goods to the doors of the consumers in England and America.

The collieries at Raneegunge afford quite a novel sight-seeing. The Hindoos of old knew of a great many things in heaven and earth,—but they had never dreamt of any such thing as geology in their philosophy.

The science has not even a name in the great tome and encyclopædia of their shasters. The tree of knowledge had not then grown to a majestic size. Now it has put forth a thousand branches, and daughter stems have grown about the parent trunk. More than sixteen hundred people work at the Raneegunge coal-mines. These have been excavated to a depth of one hundred and thirty feet—nearly double the height of the Ochterlony monument. The mines extend under the bed of the Damooder, and a traveller can proceed three miles, by torch-light, through them. The coal beds are 300 feet in thickness.*

The idea haunting the public mind about the Damooder, is that it is a stream of gigantic velocity, which throws down embankments, inundates regions for several miles, and carries away hundreds of towns and villages in the teeth of its current,—for all which it is distin-

* The coals are so near the surface, as to be observed in all the the deep nullahs, and sometimes on the surface of the plains. The natives knew that they burnt, although they made no use of them. The first mine at Raneegunge was opened by Government in conjunction with Mr Jones, 1812. Only a few shafts were sunk then. After twenty thousand rupees had been expended on it, without any return, the property was given away to Mr Jones, who conducted it in a small but profitable way, till his death in 1821 or 1822. It was then purchased by Captain James Stewart, who, with the assistance of Messrs Alexander and Co., got up a steam-engine to keep the mine clear of water. On the failure of that firm, the mine passed into the hands of our enterprising countryman, Baboo Dwarkanauth Tagore. It is now the property of the Bengal Coal Company. As the coal trade began to be lucrative, many people took up the speculation, and many were the forays between the different coal proprietors. The quantity of coals brought down in 1840 was about 15 lacs of maunds. In 1850 it was nearly its double, and in 1860 it has become its quadruple. Raneegunge is so called from the Ranee of Burdwan, who had the proprietary rights vested in her name.

guished as a Nud or masculine river, and justifies its name of the Insatiate Devourer. But up here at Raneegunge it is stripped of all such terrors, and flows a quiet and gentle stream—a 'babbling brook,' with scarcely audible murmurs, awakening a train of the softest associations, as one takes a walk along its lonely and steepy banks.

Made inquiries in vain for two carriages from the dawk-wallahs to depart on the morrow, so many folks were out this season on a holiday tour like ourselves. There are altogether four companies of them,—two European, one Hindoostanee, and one Bengalee, all of whom keep more gharries than horses. To ensure ourselves against disappointment and delay, it was arranged to have a gharry each from two of the companies. The dawk-wallahs should make hay while the sun shines, —their game is near its end. From post-runners first started by the Persian monarch Darius, to the post-riders introduced by the Mussulman emperors of India, it was a great step to improvement. The same step was made from travelling 'in horrible boxes yclept palkees,' to that by horse-dawk conveyances. In its day, people talked of this species of locomotion as a 'decided improvement.' But before long, the days of all 'slow coaches' are to be numbered in the past. Two or three years hence, the tide of men, now flowing through this channel, will have to be diverted to the grand pathway that is forming to connect the ends of the empire. The annual exodus of the Calcutta Baboos would then increase to a hundred-fold degree. People

would be pouring in streams from all parts of the realm, to seek for a pleasant break to the monotony of their lives, and for a rational use of the holiday. All debasing amusements would then give way to the yearning for the lands memorable in history and song, and the indulgence in religious mummeries would be superseded by the pleasures of revelling in scenes and sights of nature—the Railway acting no less than the part of the Messiah.

October 21*st*.—By nine o'clock this morning the gharries were ready at our doors. Made haste to pack up and start. This is emphatically the age of Progress. From the Railway, the next forward step should have been to sail careering through the regions of air,—'to paw the light winds, and gallop upon the storm.' But far from all that, we had to step into a dawk-gharry of the preceding generation, and our fall was like Lucifer's fall from heaven,—a headlong plunge from the heights of civilization to the abyss of low Andamanese life. By travelling over a hundred and twenty miles in six hours, the feelings are wrought up to a high pitch. It is difficult afterwards to screw down the tone of the mind, and prepare it for a less speedy rate of travelling. The exchange of the iron horse for one of flesh and blood, soon made itself apparent. The foretaste of luxury made the change a bitter sequel—which well nigh disposed us to believe in the philosophers who maintain the doctrine of the alternate progression and retrogression of mankind. But endurance got the better of disagreeableness, and we began gradually to be reconciled to our

now mode of travelling, and to the tardiness of our progress.

The Grand Trunk Road—the *smooth bowling-green* of Sir Charles Wood—the royal road of India, that is soon to be counted among by-gones—the great thoroughfare, which being metalled with *kunker*, earned to Lord Wm Bentinck the singularly inappropriate *soubriquet* of William the Conqueror—now lay extended before us in all its interminable length. In coming up by the train, often did it burst upon and retire from the sight—as 'if bashful, yet impatient to be seen,' and to rival the rail in the race it runs. Dr Russel compares this road to 'a great white riband straight before us.' But more aptly it is to be fancied as a sacerdotal thread on the neck of India, which runs so slanting across the breadth of our peninsula.

Marked change of aspect in the country westward of Raneegunge. The bold and the rugged here begin to make their appearance, and prepare one for the scene which awaits him in the coming world of mountains. Now a gloomy wood, and then a charming glade, diversify the romantic prospect. In the dry rocky beds of torrents, the coal crops out at the surface. Cultivation occurs only in small isolated patches, and villages at long intervals betoken a scanty population. The loaded waggons of a bullock-train, heavily 'dragging their slow length along,' afforded the only sign of life, which imparted a strange animation to the desolate tract. The country is seen to rise perceptibly, and we are hastening every moment towards that great

mountainous centre of India, the geography of which is scarcely better known at this day, than when it was laid down as an 'unexplored' terra-incognita upon Arrowsmith's old map.

The dawk stages are at every fifth or sixth mile. The different companies have differently-coloured carriages, to enable their rivals on along the road to make them out from a distance; and the coachee also sounds his bugle from a mile off, to keep the men on the alert, and the traveller finds every thing ready pending his arrival. Before long, however, a new truth breaks in upon him, and he has to exclaim 'my horse, a horse, a kingdom for a horse!' Never had an equine animal such a high bid. But even King Richard is outbidden by a horse-dawk traveller in India. They furnished us with fair samples to begin from Chowringee to Begunge. But on arrival at the fourth stage, two animals were led out—the one, a wretched tat, diminutive as a donkey—the other, a tall ricketty Rosinante will. The donkey fell to our lot. In vain did the poor creature struggle to move the gharry. These were not the days of old Jupiter to pity and relieve animate in distress. Not unless some half a dozen men had come to his assistance, could the brute be enabled to move a start. Luckily, the road had a slight descent, so that the impetus once given, the weight of the carriage pressing upon the animal, away he went sweating, foaming, and breathing thick and quick, like an asthmatic patient. The other fellow was a cunning chap. He well understood the portentous meaning of the bugle-blast, and was loath to quit the

compound. His repugnance had to be overcome by a taste of the cudgel. But the shafts no sooner touched his sides than he began to play fresh pranks. The animal's obstinacy was proof against alternate coaxing and cudgelling for several minutes, till at last he chose to dart at a speed full of risk to limb and life. The manner in which these horses are kept and worked out of their lives, is cruelty reduced to a science. They are as ill-fed as ill-housed. Mere withered shrubs, and a few old boughs made up into a shed, form all their protection from the sun and rain.

Passing Nyamutpore, the route lies across a plateau, which affords the vision a sweep over an extensive tract. No more the Beharinath—it has receded and hid its diminished head. There rose now loftier peaks to attract our notice. The ravine below stretched for many a league. It frowned with one dense and dark mass of foliage. Coming events are said to cast their shadows before. The dismal prospect looming in the distance, was but the precursor of those inhospitable regions,—and 'deserts idle,' the rock-bound barriers of which have been burst asunder by the Grand Trunk Road. In a little time the jungles gave us a sample of their hideous character. To pass through them, it is to pass as it were through the penalty of an ordeal, unless you choose to be in a mood to muse over the scene, and to make it the theme for a Byronic rhapsody. But instead of the poetic fever, we were well nigh catching a jungle fever. The view was closed on all sides by trees standing behind trees in a graduated succession. No

sight or sound, no trace of a human abode, no 'wooing breeze,' not a leaf moved, and the stowing heat roasted us to the very bones.

As sunshine is after dark, as liberty is after a dungeon, so is the charming spot that succeeds the wild and woody tract—the 'leafy labyrinth' from which we have emerged. The valley of the Barakur is a region of exceeding loveliness,—a 'weird land' of mountains, rocks, meadows, villages, and rivulets, all combining to form a most diversified and most romantic prospect. The wild mountain scenery, the towering majesty of the rocks, the solemn forests, and the headlong torrents, are contemplated with an interest which can never be derived through 'the spectacles of books.'

From the country of flat plains, of alluvial soil, of slimy rivers, of miry roads, of inundated fields, and of bogs, fens, and morasses, we are now in an alpine district—in the land of the hill and dale, of the sandstone and gneiss, of the saul and mahua. On all sides and in all quarters, does the eye meet only mountain, rock, precipice, waterfall, and forest, in all their wild and fantastic forms. Yonder are three independent hillocks —looking like little urchins of the mountains. Farther north is a wavy ridge resembling a faint blue line of low descending clouds. To the south are the Pachete Hills, that present the hazy outlines of a colossal mass towering to the height of 2000 feet. The rich valley has the beauty of a smiling Eden. On one of the hillocks is the shrine of a female divinity—the guardian Devi of the Santhals. Her image has *a turned face awry*.

The Barakur is a hill-stream, which fills and flows only during the rains. In this season it is a shallow channel, scarcely fit for the meanest craft to navigate. The water at the ford is not even two feet deep, and our gharries had to be dragged by coolies across the bed of the stream. A bridge is being constructed to dispense with the necessity of a ferry. But it is not an easy job to sink a shaft, where the real bed lies several feet below the sands on the surface. Close by the ford are two sandstone temples, in the style of an old *mut*, or pagoda of Southern India. These temples are dedicated to Shiva, whose lingas have been put up by a devotee of the Hindoo faith, to denote the presence of his religion in the heart of these wild-fastnesses.

The Barakur possesses no history—no antecedents—no name in the annals of mankind. It has a far different destiny from that of the Ganges, the Jumna, and the Godavery. Its banks have never witnessed a human event, have never echoed to the song of a poet, or to the sound of a warrior's arms. The stream has no past—nor shall it have any future. It can never be utilized into a highway for commerce. It has flowed on for ages, and shall flow on for all its days, a desert river through desert solitudes. Banks without inhabitants look upon waters without vessels. The lonely stream is a blank to the civilized world—a dead letter in the creation.

A little serai, however, owes its name to the Barakur. Though not a *bonâ-fide* Santhal village, it abounds with many men, women, and children of that race,

who are seen to work at the causeway. The dealers and grocers here are all Bengalees from the lowlands. The place is important enough to have a police chowkey. To the local worthy of the Darogah are we indebted for the modicum of statistics appertaining to his jurisdiction. Thirty years ago, the country hereabouts was an unknown tract, abandoned to the wild beasts and the savage aborigines. The Grand Trunk Road has acted the part of *Open Sesame* to these regions. Formerly tigers prowled here in numbers. Now, they are seen once or twice in a twelvemonth,—though they lurk not far off in the neighbouring woods. The Santhal is an expert archer. He is very brave when confronted with wild animals. His bow is an enormous concern, which he lies on his back to draw, setting his feet against the centre of the bow, and drawing the string with both his hands. The bear falls an easy prey to his well-planted arrow. A hare is knocked over when at full speed. Birds on the wing are no sooner marked, than off flies the peacock-feathered arrow to bring them down. A short time ago, there had come a leopard which had so concealed itself in the bush, that only a part of its hind leg could be seen. This was enough, and the brute was cleverly shot through the brains. The causeway over the river is building slowly through the last half a dozen years. It has to be suspended during the rains, when the stream gets several feet deep, and nothing can withstand the prodigious force of its current. Great alarm prevailed here during the Santhal insurrection. Watchmen had been set round

to prevent the savages from extending their operations south of the Trunk Road, and exciting the whole aboriginal population to rise in arms. In the great hurly-burly, which has made the name of Sepoy hateful to the whole world, the chimeras of a neighbouring petty chieftain created here 'a tempest in a tea-pot.'

Hardly five-and-twenty shops now make up the bazar at Barakur. Grain is chiefly vended in them, and salt imported from the Lower Provinces. Small quantities of oil-seeds, tobacco, ghee, and other local products are also exposed for sale. The same that Raneegunge was twenty-five years ago, is Barakur now —a solitary outpost of civilization in a region of barbarians. But the place bids fair to be a mart of great trading activity—to be a considerable outlet for the products of the hill-regions. The local advantages of its situation, to be heightened the more by the extension of the Railway, would attract here large numbers of men for business. The spot is particularly suited for manufactories of lac-dye and shell-lac. The raw material can be worked upon here at a cheap value. Paddy and sugar-cane are now sparingly grown for want of a market, but increased demand would give the impetus to an increased cultivation. Hides, horns, and bees-wax can be had here in abundance. Timber, which has become a valuable commodity in the Indian market, can be largely procured from these districts. There are fine pasture lands, and cattle might be reared with great success. The mineral wealth of the region is inexhaustible. Scarcely any land-owner now appreciates

the ores of iron or the veins of copper lying in his estate, and takes them into the account in estimating the value of his property. But time shall give to the Indians their own Birmingham and their own Sheffield. The future of the Jungle Mehals presents a glowing picture to the imagination. The route now passes through wastes, heaths, and forests. Two hundred years hence, its sides would be dotted with villages and manufacturing towns. Many thousands of square miles, which are now overgrown with woods, and given up to the bear and leopard, would appear hereafter a succession of orchards, corn-fields, tea-gardens, and sugar-plantations. In a region of twenty miles in circumference, there are seen now a few straggling huts of reeds and thatches. The traveller in the twentieth century would find all this space covered with neat bungalows, pleasant country-seats, warehouses, and shops. Macaulay has painted the *present* of England. Young Bengal anticipates the *prospective* of India.

The serai, deriving its name from the Barakur, is not without some of the features of a Santhal village. The site is upon a rising ground, by the side of a pure and gushing hill-stream, watering a finely-wooded valley. Cossipore, on the Hooghly, is not a more delightful spot than Barakur on the river of that name.

The serai is built of long huts, having that peculiar appearance which distinguishes the cabin of a Santhal from the homestall of a Bengal peasant. The huts are some thirty or forty in number, so arranged, facing each other in two rows, as to form a pretty street one

house deep. To almost every house is attached a pig-sty, a cattle-shed, and a dovecot. Surrounding the village are patches of luxuriant cultivation denoting the fertility of a virgin soil. The Santhal does not live wedged together in a mass, excluding sunshine and ventilation, and killing himself by typhoids and cholera. He seems to have intuitive ideas of sanitation. His mode of location eminently illustrates the principles of health carried out in practice. A Santhal village is not without interesting features in an Indian landscape —a Santhal clearance has 'a park-like appearance.'*

The Santhal is a curious specimen of the human species—an interesting subject for the ethnologist. He belongs to the Tamulian family of mankind—a race existing from pre-historic, perhaps antediluvian, ages,

* The following is the sketch of a Santhal village. 'Sundani Kulan is a fine large Santhal village, situate close under the hills, and surrounded by sheets of mustard cultivation. The village is about one mile in length; being one long street one house deep, with about one hundred family enclosures; each enclosure occupying from four to five log-wood houses. These enclosures are made with the green boughs of the sakua; planted in the ground and tied together they keep each family distinct from its neighbours; they generally contain a Santhal and his wife, several married children and their families; a pig-sty, buffalo-shed, and a dove-cot; a wooden stand holds the water-pots, the water from which is used for drinking or cooking: there is also a rude wooden press for expressing oil from the mustard seed. In a corner of the yard there will be a plough, or a couple of solid-wheeled carts, whilst numbers of pigs and poultry are seen in every direction. Each of these enclosures contains on an average ten souls, thus giving a population of one thousand to Sundani. The street is planted on each side with the *sohajna*, which tree is a great favourite with the Santhal. The numerous pig-styes and great abundance of poultry in the village proclaim the absence of caste amongst this free and unshackled and un-priest-ridden tribe.'—*Notes upon a Tour through the Rajmahl Hills, by Captain Walter S. Sherwill, Revenue Surveyor.*

and the progenitors of which were the *ancients* of our ancient Aryans. He is the descendant of a cognate branch of those who are styled in the oldest hymns of the Rig-Veda, a work forty centuries old, under the denomination of Dasyas—afterwards the Asuras of the Poorans. The 'dark complexion, and flat nose, and small eyes' of the Vedic Dasyas, are yet visible in their posterity of the nineteenth century. The Santhal has the honour of being aboriginal to India. It was *his* forefathers who first occupied and inhabited the land, then known under the name of Colar.* From them the country was usurped by invaders from the *Ariana* of the Greek geographers. The Aryan followers of Brahma first settled in the Punjab—the *Supta Sindhoo* of the Vedas, and the *Hupta-Hindo* of the Zenda-vesta. In the course of ages, they gradually moved down the valleys of the Jumna and Ganges, driving before them the ancestors of the present Bheels, Coles, and Santhals, to retire into the woods and mountains. There the race has lived and lingered for ages—there the race lives and lingers to this day.

The aboriginal Santhal has marked distinctions from an Aryan Hindoo. He has a different facial and craniological conformation. The dialect he speaks bears not the remotest affinity with the language which forms the primal root of human speech from the Bay of Bengal to the Baltic, and the banks of the Shannon. The Santhal is a naked savage, who knows only to hew

* This was the earliest name of India in the opinion of Col. Wilford. See his '*Comparative Essay on the Ancient Geography of India.*'

wood and till the soil. He has neither any alphabet nor any arithmetic. He has no architecture, none of the useful or ornamental arts. If his race were swept to-day from the earth, there would remain to-morrow no monument, no laws, no literature, to record the past existence of his nation. The poor fellow has no recognized entity among mankind, is beyond the 'pale of civilization,' is excluded from 'the comity of nations' —and his very existence is ignored.

Those living at Barakur are not easily made out from the Bengalees sojourning amongst them. The same dark skin, the same naked habits, and the same squalid poverty, mark as much the rustic Hindoo as the primitive Santhal. Hybrid manners and speech have tainted the purity of the aboriginal type, and local intermixture has made faint the line of demarcation separating the two races. In going through the bazar on foot, we attracted a group of the savages, who spoke to us in their native tongue, mingled with Bengalee phrases and Hindoostanee words. They appeared to have fallen into many of the habits of their Bengalee neighbours, to have taken to begging that they did not know before, and to have lost the honest simplicity and nobility of the true barbarian. In a place like this, situated on the highroad, the influx of travellers cannot fail to produce its usual work of demoralization.

But after all, the Santhal is not to be missed, with his unfamiliar form, his strong original features, and his non-Hindoo peculiarities. He is singled out by his short make, his thick lips, high cheek-bones, flat nose,

and small eyes. He has little or no beard—he is a youth all his life, and his chin never knows the use of a razor. The savage is also a fop. He is very fond of wearing long hair, of dressing, plaiting, and gathering it up in a knot over the head, and fastening in the ends with a wooden comb. His dandyism has the best apology in the periwig-pated miniature of Johnson, or in the curly-haired portraits of our ex-judges on the walls of the Court-house. The raiment of a Santhal is a mere strip of cloth to hide his nudity, passed not over his waist, but between his legs, and fastened to a hair or cotton string that goes round the loins. The language he speaks is an unintelligible gibberish, quite un-Sanscrit in its element. He has no caste, like the Hindoo, no prejudice against the substantial good things of life, such as meat and drink. He has his buffaloes, his cows, his kids, his swine, his poultry, and his pigeons. All these by turns furnish his board with good cheer. In case of need, he does not refuse to make snakes, frogs, ants, and rats exercise his gastronomic powers. He is merry-hearted by nature, and carouses himself with the *Pachui*. He has his own balls and suppers, and dances with his wives and comrades the wild hornpipe of his race.* There was one

* 'A very extensive dance which I witnessed in the hills took place by torch-light, at midnight, during the month of April, at which about five thousand Santhals were present; these dances are performed by night and day; at the present one about four hundred women danced at the same time. A lofty stage is erected in an open plain, upon which a few men seat themselves, they appear to act as guides or masters of the ceremony; radiating from this stage, which forms the centre of the dance, are numerous strings composed of from

young gallant fellow, whom we saw to lead his youthful wife by the hand on the road, chatting, fondling, and laughing as they proceeded. They stopped to look at our new faces, and we in turn gazed upon them as an interesting pair. The Santhal keeps a fine poultry, and has also his brewery. This was a great temptation to our doctor, who was for testing the hospitality of the race. None of us had tasted any food since morning, and a Santhal fully came within Dr Johnson's definition of man being a *cooking* animal. In this far-away wild tract, what could have been more desirable than his well-stocked poultry to turn into a good account. It made the doctor take up the cue to exhaust a lecture half an hour long. He had little need of his harangue to impress upon us the necessity for something immediate to turn into chyle and blood, and put the system in its equilibrium. There was, besides, to have been derived the pleasure of a peep at Santhal life—a drinking-bout with the barbarian in his own home.

twenty to thirty women, who holding each other by the waistband, their right shoulder, arm, and breast bare, hair highly ornamented with flowers or with bundles of Tusser silk dyed red, dance to the maddest and wildest of music drawn from monkey-skin covered drums, pipes, and flutes; and as they dance, their positions and postures, which are most absurd, are guided and prompted by the male musicians who dance in front of and facing the women; the musicians throw themselves into indecent and most ludicrous positions, shouting and capering and screaming like mad-men; and as they have tall peacock feathers tied round their heads and are very drunk, the scene is a most extraordinary one. The women chant as they dance, and keep very good time in their dancing by beating their heels on the ground; the whole body of dancers take about one hour to complete the circuit of the central stage, as the progressive motion is considerably retarded by a constant retrogressive motion. Relays of fresh women are always at hand to relieve the tired ones.—*Captain Sherwill.*

His *Pachui* was certainly a new thing under the sun, and was worth a trial as much as Runjeet Sing's famous *pearl-powdered* potation. But the lawyer, brought up among the technicalities of 'declarations' and 'replications,' of 'rebutters' and 'surrebutters,' had no time for romancing. He put in his veto to the proposal of the medico, who retired in no good humour, drawing up his face into a doleful pucker.

The Santhalinee, in her youth, is not an uninteresting creature. She has the short womanly stature, and a delicately-moulded form. Her complexion is a shade darker than the brown. She has long black locks, and large soft eyes, which give a pleasing expression to her countenance. She is cheerful in manners, and has sufficient delicacy to make her admired and beloved. Though she lacks many an item to constitute her a beauty in the strict Aryan sense of that term, she has about her a sort of undefinable charm, which the fastidious may not be able to see. To an enthusiast like Chateaubriand she might serve as the model of an Atalanta. She is a sultana in her own kingdom, and deserves the homage of a sylvan goddess in her native woodlands. The Santhalinee who attracted our notice was apparently of the age of twenty-five. She was inclined to be fat, and had gentle features. In the fashion of a Bengalee woman, she wore a *dhooty* passed round her waist over to the shoulders. But, like them, she did not cover her head, nor veil her face. She was an unassuming creature who knew only the modesty of nature. The woman's hair was parted in the forelock, and it

was oiled, plaited, and tied up in a knot over the nape. She had decked her person with many brass chains and necklaces of beads. From her ears hung more than half-a-dozen earrings of brass. On her arms and feet were heavy bell-metal ornaments. Indeed, it was a sight to see the sable beauty in her complete equipment. Her air of simple innocence, her courteous smile, and her artless expression of countenance, gave her an interesting appearance. So long the ice had not been broken, and she silently watched our ways and movements. But when the doctor opened a conversation, she talked freely and familiarly, appearing to feel no inconvenience under the heavy load of her ornaments.* She pointed out her house at a little distance, in which she was willing to entertain our *Chaor-Durvesh* party. It was a pity that we had not some beads or trinkets with us to make her a present; and failing that, we have taken the pains to do her justice in these pages.

'Formed in benevolence of nature,
Obliging, modest, gay, and mild,
Woman's the same endearing creature
In courtly town and savage wild.'

It puts, however, a man's philosophy to the proof to appreciate the Santhal matrons, who look 'so withered

* 'I had a quantity of those ornaments weighed, and found that the bracelets fluctuated from two to four pounds; the anklets four pounds each; and as a fully-equipped belle carries two anklets and twelve bracelets, and a necklace weighing a pound, the total weight of ornaments carried on her person amounts to *thirty-four pounds*, of bell metal,—a greater weight than one of our drawing-room belles could well lift. Almost every woman, in comfortable circumstances, carries twelve pounds' weight of brass ornaments.'—*Captain Sherwill.*

and so wild in their attire,' that they might stand for the weird sisters of Shakespeare.

The Tamulian Santhal is neither so savage as the bear that climbs to eat the fruit of his mahua tree, nor so degraded as the ape that havocs his plantain garden, as is erroneously supposed by the outside world. In his social life is found much that is pleasing and hopeful. The Santhal is an agriculturist. Before his axe the forest disappears, and is converted into a fertile tract. He is not only industrious, but to some extent even intelligent. He knows how to choose soil, and to study the weather. He understands the rotation of crops. He has invented his own plough and cart, and has learnt to build his own log-hut. He knows how to express oil—has his granary, his dairy, his poultry, and his brewery. He is a *grist*, who is fond of his wives and children, and lives with his boys and daughters, their wives and husbands, all about him—imparting to his mode of living a patriarchal appearance, which carries one back to the days of that society 'when the patriarch sat in the door of his tent, and called in the passing traveller under his roof.' Indeed, he keeps a zenana of several wives, like a true Oriental, imitating therein his neighbours the wild elephant, the buffalo, and the monkey. But he is not an idle, good-for-nought fellow, to throw the heaviest part of manual labour on the weaker sex. Rather he is chevalier enough to hold womankind in deference, to treat his wife as a 'better half.' He woos a maiden with presents, and next marries her by giving a feast

and a sacrifice. He brings her home to do only in-door work, to control only household matters. She is watched with care when enceinte, and on the birth of a child is made to keep to her house for five days, attended upon by her husband. The Santhalinee, too, has her own *code-feminine*,* which teaches her to reprobate the conduct of an erring sister, to be a faithful and loving partner of the house of her lord, to be a good house-wife, and also a market-going woman. She enjoys an equality with men, and is not doomed to wear her life out in a perpetual widowhood, like her Hindoo sisters of the plain.

In the estimation of our native mahajuns, the boundless tract of the Jungle Mehals is of less account than the two or three square miles into which are crowded the banking-houses, the warehouses, and the shipping of Hautcola and Burrabazar. But the few Bengalee traders who have cast in their lots amongst the barbarians, and who exchange in the bi-weekly fairs and markets of those people salt and cotton goods, brass-pots and trinkets, for lac, dammer, coriander seed, and

* It is curious to know that even the female of an ourang-outang has a sense of the *pudor*. 'The adult female which Sir Del' Casse exhibited some months ago in Calcutta was a much larger and more powerful beast, and had a quite different expression of countenance. She was also, on the whole, good-tempered, but uncertain and dangerous to handle, which prevented my taking her dimensions. I consider her to be of the race termed *Murs Rambhi* by Mr Brooke. A remarkable trait of this individual was her decided sense of *pudor*: however she might lie or roll about, she never failed to use one foot for purposes of concealment, holding therein a small piece of board generally, or in default of this a wisp of straw, or whatever she could seize on for the purpose.'—*Supplementary Report of the Curator of the Zoological Department, J. A. S., July, No.* 1847.

many other forest-produce, sometimes reap a profit of one hundred per cent. on their transactions. The sons of nature still sell their goods by the bulk, and not by any weight. They make their computation by the help of knots on a string. It concerns not a Santhal now more than to provide himself with food, raiment, and a log-hut. The taste for dainties, for fine tissues, and for jewels, is yet unknown to him. He has scarcely any idea of property, and knows not what it is to leave behind a heritage. He has yet no commercial life, and beyond simple bartering has hardly learnt to make any other bargain. He must take a long time yet to know Soobhunkur's arithmetic, to make a practical use of figures on paper, and to be a match for the men of a bank-note world.*

No other form of civil polity is known to the Santhals than the commonwealth of clans and townships, acknowledging a chief elected by the community. They have no statutory laws and provisions for the well-being and conservation of society, and yet exhibit among themselves, in an eminent degree, that social order which is the aim of all civilized legislation, and which is the greatest blessing of the social state. This 'harmony out of discord' is the result of acting upon the dictates of that common-sense law—that natural equity, the principles of which are implanted in every human

* Captain Sherwill thus describes a Santhal fair. 'Besides grain of various kinds, there was a fair display of sugar-cane, salt, lac, dammer or rosin, brass-pots and bangles, beads, tobacco, sugar, vegetables, chillies, tamarinds, and spices; potatoes, onions, ginger, cotton, thread, and cloth, the latter in great abundance.'

breast. It is a harmony which has deceived political enthusiasts into an admiration of the savage life. Though the Santhal is a practical republican in acting upon the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, though he has a nervous horror of servitude and all foreign work, he lives out after all only his animal existence. His intellectual life is a void. He has no other care or ambition than to keep his body and soul together, to wander free as the air he breathes, and then to be missed 'one morn on the accustomed hill,' and heard of no more.

To complete the picture of the Santhal, by a few words on his morality and religion. Naked, and snake-eating, and unlettered as he is, the Santhal, too, has a code of honour and morality. He is distinguished for nothing so much as his truthfulness. The civilized man hates lying, but the pure-minded and straightforward Santhal knows not lying.* He is no more truth-loving than he is inoffensive, grateful, and hospitable. The present of an empty bottle has in his eyes the value of the present of a kingdom. It is an unearthly rarity, for the gift of which his thankfulness has no bounds. The virtues of the untaught savage are few, but genuine. His religion, likewise, is pure and unsophisticated. No atheistical doubts ever come across his mind. He professes no doctrinal creed. His

* All laws of evidence, all rules and regulations for swearing, whether upon the Bible, or by the Ganga-water, or on solemn affirmation and oath, proclaim only the lying propensity of civilized men. The Santhal is spared all this humiliating legislation. He has, indeed, 'swearing by the tiger's skin, or by salt, but swearing at all is unpardonable, for the truth by a Santhal is held sacred.'

faith, founded on the monitions of his conscience, is as unostentatious and sincere as is the faith of a child in his Creator. Originally, the religion of the aborigines must have been that Sabianism which untutored man is suggested to adopt by his imagination rather than his reason. It is by the contact of intercourse with the followers of Hindooism that corruptions appear to have crept into their faith. The persecuted Buddhists, who sought refuge in their mountain-fastnesses, were the first to initiate them into the belief of that Beedoo Gossain—the corruption of Buddha Gossain—whom they adore as the most Supreme Deity. The propagandist Shivites and Sactos, next penetrating into their jungles, proselytized them to the worship of the Puranic divinities. To them must be traced the introduction of the Churuk Poojah, or swinging festival, among the Santhals,—a contagion certainly caught from the Bengalees, of all people the most idolatrous upon the earth. There is no trace of the worship of Krishna among the savages. Sentimental Vishnuism is beyond the comprehension of the undeveloped understandings and feelings of the rude Santhal. The fetishism of the aboriginal races is thought to have prevailed from an ante-Hindoo antiquity. It is supposed to form the basis of that idolatry which is the disgrace of the Hindoo nation. But it is obvious from the Rig-Veda, that the early Dasyas practised no religion, worshipped no gods, and performed no rites and sacrifices. Their irreligiousness was the great feature which discriminated them from the Aryas.

In the Santhals of Barakur one fails not to recognize their identity with those uncouth and squalid beings who are seen to work in the ditches of our metropolis. As natural to an inferior race of people under transition, the Santhal no more imitates the Bengalee than does Young Bengal imitate the energy and enterprise of the Anglo-Saxon.

Objects of curiosity and interest as the Santhals are, they but afford a partial and unsatisfactory sight—a mere glimpse of the tribe who inhabit at Barakur. To view them in the untainted purity of their type, the traveller must pass through the barriers of those mountains which gird and isolate them from all mankind. He must penetrate into their wild fastnesses, and climb upon the alpine heights of their abode, to behold groups of *bonâ fide* Paharees occupying the sides and summits of the hills—some basking their bodies in the sun, some hallooing to scare away a bear, or roaming to get a shot at a deer—others sauntering among the woods in search of honey-combs, wild yams, and other edible roots: the women husking the corn, or expressing oil from the mustard-seed, or cooking household food: the young maidens performing the duties of their toilette, or walking or drinking toddy with their intended bridegrooms: and the children either sprawling upon the earth, or reposing in the grass-hammock. The Santhal who dwells in the valley is somewhat a nomad. He has no local attachments. To-day he sets himself down at this spot: to-morrow he is off to another region, with all that he has upon earth, wife,

children, and relatives around him. He is, therefore, looked upon as an interloper. The genuine, intact, and orthodox Paharee loves privacy, and keeps aloof upon his mountain eyrie. The adventurous traveller, who seeks this extraordinary creature in his highland abode, finds himself in a strange land. His new face at first alarms the community. But no sooner does familiarity thaw away the first impressions, than the stranger has the whole village with him, and is alike welcome to the men, the women, and the children.

How appropriately has Bishop Heber styled the Paharees as 'Gaels of the East'—little anticipating that Gael would turn out into Cool or Cole; and that the two tribes, apparently seeming to be different from each other by the remoteness of their situation, are in truth branches of the same genealogical tree.

The Hill Tribes of India are yet obscurely known. As representatives of a race anterior to the Aryan Hindoos, the study of their ethnologic characteristics promises to furnish valuable data for the physical history of mankind. In a large measure, the customs of these people, although slightly tinctured with Buddhism and Brahminism, but free from every taint of Mussulman intermixture, remain up to this moment purely conventional to themselves. This, together with their antiquities and traditions, forms a rich mine that may be worked upon to throw light on the *Tamulian* period of Indian history. Such highly interesting results can be hoped to be obtained only by laborious researches amongst the people. To pursue those re-

searches is feasible now. Our fathers and grandfathers knew as little of the Paharees living in the backwoods of Bengal, as in our day is known of the Bushmen of Africa, or the Maories of New Zealand. In their days few men travelled so far as Ranegunge. All beyond Ranegunge was thought to be chaos, or 'rubbish thrown aside when the magnificent fabric of the world was created.' The region loomed dimly, through an obscuring and distorting haze of fears and prejudices, as a hideous wilderness, full only of crags and glens, woods and wastes, savage beasts and still more savage bipeds. Solitary pilgrims returning from Byjnath spread only tales of pathless jungles, of swarms of bears and tigers, of thugs and marauders, of wild and irreligious *Mletchas*, and of a thousand other privations. This *was* the picture seen through the wrong end of the telescope. Now that picture has been seen through the right end. A royal road has been cut through the rocks and jungles; bridges have been flung over the courses of the rivulets; serais and bungalows have succeeded to the dens of beasts and robbers; chowkies and cutcherries have sprung up where the footsteps of man dared not penetrate; and sanatories have been founded where malaria engendered the most deadly diseases. The apprehensions haunting the minds of our ancestors have subsided into idle fancies. Rather the new realm has turned out to be a world of riches, of poetry, and of enchantment. The feeling of awe and aversion towards it has to be succeeded by one of allurement. The unknown treasures

with which it abounds, cannot fail to attract the attention of capitalists, and make it 'the future scene of the mineral and metallic enterprise for the country.' There shall flock into it holiday tourists to enjoy a peep at romantic nature,—sketchers and photographers to gaze upon 'gigantic walls of rock, tapestried with the wild foliage and flowers,'—lovers of sport to hunt the gaour in wooded valleys,—invalids to recruit their health upon the breezy hill-tops,—and savans to study a new race of men, a new ornithology, and a new botany. Sooner or later, when this reflux of the public feeling shall come to pass—when all classes of men shall turn their steps to this realm, Santhal men and manners, Santhal lineage and speech, and Santhal traditions and superstitions, will have the best opportunity for investigation. Since forty centuries, the descendants of the ancient Dasyas and Simyas of the Rig-Veda have lived on unknown to the civilized world. But before many generations pass away they are destined to emerge into notice, to occupy a place in the history of our country, and to rise to an honourable position in the view of nations.*

To resume the tale of our journey. The day was near its end. His Phœbusship had sorely tried our patience all the day long, and had not failed to be a drawback to our pushing on and on. But not so is a hungry stomach, which takes away the edge of the appetite for the picturesque, and leaves you in a humour

* The spirit of this account has been borrowed from Macaulay's celebrated description of the Highlands.

to be pleased only with a dinner. The doctor was writhing in mortification to have missed the good cheer of a Santhal cabin. Thirst and hunger, therefore, decided us to halt at *Taldangah*. The bungalow there stood nearly a mile up from the Barakur; and in walking this distance, the bit of exercise proved an agreeable vicissitude after a long pack-up in the gharry. On arrival at the bungalow the khitmutgar made his appearance with a salaam, followed by the other assistants at his heels. He was ordered to prepare a simple dinner of rice and curried fowl, and the men forthwith wended on their ways to make themselves deserving of a douceur. Our servants also began to dress their own meal. The coachmen and syces picketted the horses to graze on a fine sward, while fires were lighted by them, and their cauldrons sent forth volumes of savoury steam. The scene resembled a little bivouac.

These dawk-bungalows are, in point of fact, miniature roadside inns on the European model. The principal building of masonry, one story high, with a high-peaked roof of thatch or tiles, stands in the middle of a green plot. It consists of a suite of three or four rooms, one of which is appropriated to the purposes of a bath. In a corner of the compound lie the kitchen and outhouses, and adjoining to them is a well, generally of excellent water. There are beddings and furnitures nearly as good as in the houses of decent townsfolk. The eatables and drinkables are good enough for nutritives in their way. The Asiatic has nothing to show like these bungalows. There is no table in a

Mahomedan serai, to which the traveller can go up as a guest for entertainment—it is good only for laying the head under a roof at night. In the time of Aurungzebe, Sultan Aazim, and his son Bedr Bukht, rode on post from Dacca to Agra, over an excellent road. But they had to live on the way only on bread and dried fruits. One day during the journey they wanted to have the treat of a little *keechery*. It was brought from a serai in a large wooden bowl; and although they were very hungry, they could not bring themselves to taste it out of such a vessel. The Hindoo, again, is a still more unsociable creature, who scarcely knows the pleasure of association at meals. He is accustomed to cook his own dinner, and eat it in solitary separation, against the principle of human gregariousness. On the road, therefore, his inn at the best is either a rude hut of matting, or the shade of a peepul or mango tree. It is not known how were Asoca's *durmshalas* on the ancient high-roads of India. Caste-prejudices then were as much a bar to the cultivation of sociableness as in our day, and those houses of public entertainment could scarcely have abounded with the plenty and comfort of a modern *table d'hôte*.

The south-western extremity of the compound was occupied by two or three long brick-walled sheds, with high-mounted roofs of tiles. These, we were given to understand, had been hastily put up to accommodate those detachments of European troops who had to move up in a constant succession during the late rebellion. Doubtless, native soldiers have passed up and down

this road many a time. But never have such neat and comfortable sheds been placed at their disposal on the way. Aliens from a colder latitude certainly require a greater attention than the children of the soil. But invidious distinctions in the same profession beget a grudge that should be avoided.

It was near nightfall. As the sun went down behind the hills, its receding rays were gradually withdrawn from the landscape. The great mounds of nature threw their dark shadows far across the plain, while the dying sunbeams yet lingered to play upon their tops. Over the pure, cloudless sky, was the glow of the last light. The breeze, bland and perfumed by the odour of the wild flowers, came in soft cool gushes. It was one of those calm and delightful evenings which we went out to enjoy by spreading a carpet on the green sward surrounding the bungalow. To heighten the enjoyment by a *sauce piquante*, we had each passed round to us a glass of that beverage, which was brewed not from the Vedic *Soma* plant, but from the English hops,—accompanied by that sovereign luxury, that never-failing source of refreshment to the weary—the invaluable Hooka. Shortly after dark, dinner was announced. Indeed, the lighted room, the matted floor, the neat chairs, the white table-cloth, the knives, forks, plates, dishes, and napkins set on the table, had nowhere produced the same effect on our minds, as in the solitary public-house that gives welcome to the wanderer in the wilderness of Taldangah. How miserable in comparison is a native serai! Our countrymen are

never so open to a charge of barbarism, as when they are judged of by the mean and squalid huts composing their inns. The voice of unanimity called upon the doctor to take the chair—a tavern chair that was Johnson's 'throne of human felicity.' Our worthy tradesman now did the justice that was expected from his obesity. The sensible doctor took to a veteran fowl for cargo sufficient to outlast his voyage of a long wintry night. The spare attorney was judicious, as he is wont to be. To speak of our own self, a chronic headache has long cured us of the glutton, and we can never venture to load our stomach beyond its registered tonnage. The meal being over, the travellers' book was produced, to note down the hours of our entry and exit. Our fares were then paid down with an additional gratuity to each of the men. The charge of an extra half-rupee per head was also counted down, as each traveller, alighting at the bungalow, has to contribute that sum to its repair.

Though the day had been warm enough, the night in these highlands was agreeably cold. Packing ourselves up in the gharry this time, was felt to be rather snug than otherwise. To exclude the artificial draughts of air, created by the motion of the carriage, we drew close the doors, keeping open the shutters, to cast a look now and then at the landscape. Our route lay through a country full of jungles, the gloom of which was thickened by the shadows of the hills. The moon, sunk down near the horizon, cast only those 'pale glimpses,' which made 'darkness visible.' On either

hand the scenery was completely wrapped up in the triple shades of Hecate, the hills, and the forests. No choice was left to us, but to lie extended in full length, and consign ourselves to sleep.*

* The country thus missed is particularly interesting in a geological point of view. From fossils obtained here, Ederest thinks 'these eminences were once, like Europe, islands of primitive rocks, rising in the middle of a large ocean; the débris formed beds of humus out of which vegetables grew and formed the present soil.' The twigs of the *butea frondosa* are covered here with the 'lurid red tears of the lac.' There is a Deputy Magistrate at Bagsama, and a Dawk Chowkey at Gobindpore for postal correspondence from the wilderness.

CHAPTER V.

October 22nd.—FOUND ourselves at daybreak in the very heart and core of the hill-regions—upon the highest plateau of Upper Bengal. From its very foot we now gazed upon the Parisnath—covered all over with a gorgeous vegetation, and standing in the 'wild pomp of its mountain majesty.' The head was tipped with the first rays of the sun, and 'jocund day stood tiptoe upon the misty top.' Face to face to Parisnath stands a range of hills, vying its sovereign height with as proud an eminence. Beyond them peep the diminished heads of others, till at last the farthest ridge seems to have melted away in the horizon.

> Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills,
> A surging scene, and only limited
> By the blue distance.—MRS HEMANS.

The valley below spreads out into a beautiful amphitheatre, and the little village nestled in its bosom looks like 'beauty sleeping on the lap of horror.'

To one accustomed only to the monotonous flat of alluvial plains the first sight of this sublime mountain scenery is an epoch in his life, the romantic panorama realizing the truth of the best simile in the English

literature. 'Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise,' is at once daguerreotyped on the mind. It is a scene fully coming under the head of *undescribables*, and defying the human alphabet to represent the infinite varieties of nature. The space enclosed by walls of everlasting rock, with nothing above but 'the brave o'erhanging firmament,' and 'the majestical roof fretted with golden fire,' is better calculated to inspire feelings of devotion, than the proudest temple that was ever dedicated to the worship of the Almighty,—and to uplift the mind 'from nature up to nature's God.'

Topechanchee, situated at the foot of Parisnath, forms a scene of bustle and vivacity, little expected in a nook of the forest which had echoed only to the cries of the savage and the howlings of the wild beasts. The people residing here are a lower order of the Beharese, who exhibit a strange mixture of the state of nature and the state of civilization. Fields of paddy and mustard spread round the spot. Topechanchee is now the border village on the Grand Trunk Road, that Chass was on the old route *viâ* Hazareebaug,—the village where Bengal and Behar on each other gaze, and where the traveller has to pass on from one to the other province. Hence the popular saying of the Hindoostanees,

Jab koi pâr hojâtâ Châss,
Tab chhorta wuhi ghar ki âs:

The man who crosses Chass, leaves hope behind of returning to his home. How the rude epigram gives an abbreviated exposition of the climatology of the 'Inferno' of Bengal.

It was at Topechanchee, then, that we were at last to bid an adieu to the dear old Bengal of our nativity, and pass on to the land of ancient Magadha, the kingdom of Jarasindha, the scene of Chandra-Gupta's and Asoca's sovereignty, the cradle of Buddhism, the country which once sent a religion from its bosom to the Chinese, and now sends its opium to the very same people—the 'bane and antidote' together.

History does not record where ancient Gour parted from Magadha. In the times of the Moguls the famous Terriagurry Pass formed the westernmost boundary of Bengal Proper. Beyond, commenced the territories of Hindoostan—the Brahmarishi or Punyabhumi of Menu.

No sooner had the gharry been examined, the wheels greased, the coachman and groom changed, and the whole concern pronounced *road-worthy*, than we prepared to leave Topechanchee, and proceed along the foot of the hills. As far to the right as eye could reach, extended one stupendous rampart of stone—peak after peak appearing in a rapid succession, and assuming new phases of beauty and sublimity according as the curves in the road altered the prospect. There is seldom any pleasure so solemn as that derived from clouds and tempests lowering on the hill-tops. But no chance of its realization could exist in the weather of a calm October morning. However, a few wreaths of smoke from the huts of the neighbouring bazar had collected themselves in a body about the middle of the hills, and resting there, floated upon the atmosphere like thin

clouds. Rather than acknowledge to have altogether missed the sight, this was lustily contended by one of the party to have partially realized the wished-for spectacle.

It is now immediately after the rains, and from the bottom to the brow the hills are clothed with one mass of verdure and foliage. The bluff rock is scarcely seen to peep from out the green mantle. Two months hence the trees will have to shake off their leaves, and the naked rocks will then be seen as huge skeletons of an antediluvian world. The luxuriant vegetation is all wild. Not a single familiar tree can the eye make out. It may be that, as in the animal so in the vegetable world, there is one class which is wild and inimical, and there is the other which is domestic and useful. There are as wild trees as there are savage beasts; and as we have the domesticated horse and cow, so have we the domesticated mango, plantain, cocoa-nut, and tamarind. Nature may have intended such a classification in the creation, and her wisdom is inscrutable.

At the foot of the hills the trees are clearly visible in all their actual dimensions and details. Towards the middle they appear to have dwindled away into low shrubberies. And at the top the eye meets only an undistinguishable mass of green. Mere passing travellers as we are, and laymen with 'a completely anti-geometrical head,' this is enough to give us a rough idea of the altitude of the hills. The highest peak has been computed to be near 5000 feet above the level of the sea, and about 4000 feet from its base. It entered

into the head of one of us to propose putting up this computation on the topmost crest, with a view to enable the future traveller, two or three thousand years hence, to know the additional height acquired by the mountain in the lapse of time from the date hereof. But he gave up his crotchet on recollection that the English or Bengalee may become as obsolete as the Assyrian Cuneiform to the generations of that day. The hills are said 'to grow with their growth,' and the Himalayas of to-day must have been mere pop-hills in the infancy of the earth.

From a box six feet by three, the passing traveller sees the stupendous Parisnath lift up its head to heaven. This is seeing it merely in its disenchanted, as-it-is, and matter-of-fact state—without any speculation in the cold eyes. To enjoy the view in the best of humours, he should be in a reverie like that into which Mirza fell on the hills of Bagdad—he should transport himself in his imagination to the days of India in the eighth and ninth centuries. Then would the length and the breadth of our peninsula appear to him as one vast field of hot contention between the Brahmins, the Buddhists, and the Jains—the first refuting, persecuting, and chasing away the two latter to the woods and mountains. Then would these desolate hill-regions appear to him as enlivened with shrines and monasteries, and peopled with monks and contemplative religionists. And then would these silent vales be heard by him as resounding with the hymns of chanting priests and the voices of preaching worshippers. Such

things were where all is now wild and without a trace of habitation. The land was completely lost to the civilized world for more than a thousand years—its name and history were forgotten; and until the opening of the Grand Trunk Road, except to solitary pilgrims, its very site was unknown.

The Jews have their Sinai—the Jains their Parisnath. The hill is named after the principal demi-god of that sect. Its founder meant to have steered the same middle course between Brahminism and Buddhism, that Nanuk Shah intended in a later age—to have the Hindoos and Mussulmans amalgamated by the doctrines of Sikh-ism. But the Brahmins can never 'bear a brother near the throne.' They were touched in the sore point by their antagonists inculcating against a hereditary priesthood, and could have no rest nor respite until they had driven their dangerous adversaries from every city, town, and haunt of men whatsoever.

In a council of twenty-four, forming a divine hierarchy, Parisnath is the head. He and his colleagues, however, are so absorbed in meditation as to be blind and deaf to the concerns of this nether world. It is no wonder then that their religion should have failed, when deities, like Eastern despots, never chose to open their ears and eyes to the affairs of humanity. Their godships must excuse us this bit of reflection.

There is now no trace of the Buddhists—they have been chased clean from India. The Jains still hold a footing in the land,—the last ray of a flickering

religion having long been cherished by them in the depths of caverns or on the heights of mountains,

'The world forgetting, by the world forgot,'

till under better auspices it has begun to flourish with a renewed vitality.

In the range the eastern peak is the most noted. On its top Parisnath obtained *nirvan* or emancipation from matter. The spot is especially sacred for that circumstance, and forms the holiest place of worship to the sect. Upon that spot is a small but handsome temple, with marble floors and open verandahs. In passing along is caught a glimpse of the white dome of this temple from the valley below, like a speck on the brow of the hill.

It would make a pleasant excursion to go up to see this temple, and also enjoy the views commanded from the top of the hill. The cost is little, and there is a pathway from this side to make the ascent. In introducing the reader to the hills, he is not the less surely than sorely to regret his being landed only at their foot, and not carried up to their top—to feast his eyes thence on the long sweep of hills and valleys, apparently tossed about in the wildest confusion, and yet all of them settled into the perfect loveliness of Nature's most exquisite handiwork. Such a diversion had been omitted, to be provided for in the programme of our journey, and we have to warn the reader against a mistake that lost to us a rich treat—and tasting the pleasures of the up-hill work of old Sisyphus.

By itself, the Jain temple is not a little curious object for sight-seeing. It crowns the hill only some 800 feet below the highest summit. The site is on the top of a detached peak protected on three sides by protruding masses of rock thrown out from the hill. Parisnath must have had a fine poetic taste to pitch upon this spot for a romantic seclusion, and an undisturbed communion with the heavens. He was born in populous Benares, and he died here upon this lonely mountain-top. The pilgrims, climbing to see the last scene of his life and labours, are shown his foot-prints, marking the spot where he obtained his *nirvan*. The foot-prints are quite Brobdignagian,—from which not Gulliver only, but any man might be in imminent danger of being trodden to death. The space for half a mile in circumference is cleared of all forest, and covered with temples and platforms of masonry. There is a reservoir of water, without which the residence of the priests and monks would have been quite out of the question. This reservoir is an artificial excavation, and a proof that Buddhists could as well 'call forth waters from the barren rock.' The few human beings who live here isolated from all mankind are amply compensated by that fine health which is owed to a pure atmosphere. An intercourse, like a still under-current, passes throughout the year with the outside world, and supplies the religieuses perched above 'the smoke and stir' of this world with many of the dainties of life. The temple is about 100 years old. The reservoir must be of anterior date—probably of the age of Parisnath himself.

The season of pilgrimage is in March, when a great *mela* is held in the depths of this wilderness. Crowds of pilgrims, sometimes numbering 100,000 persons, then resort hither from distant parts of the Peninsula, and their annual offerings accumulate a large wealth at the shrine. The route from the north, lying through dry beds of torrents, and amid gloomy glens over-arched with foliage, is less steep and precipitous, and has been preferred from remote times. Immediately at the foot of the hill is a forest-clearance, which forms the encamping ground of the pilgrims. This spot is called Modoobun. Here also are some grand temples, in the principal of which is a black image of Parisnath. Over the god, a cobra spreads out its seven expanded heads as a canopy. There are other deities—Khetropal, which may be identified with the Nirsingha of the Brahmins—and Chukreswari and Padmabatti, with Doorga and Luchmee. A large aged banyan—a sacred tree with the Jains—is also an interesting object. The principal temple has been built by Juggut Sett—the famous Jain banker at Moorshedabad, of great wealth and influence in the days of Clive.

From all yesterday we have been accomplishing our journey with horses, each of which might furnish a subject for comment. How audacious the dawk-companies are to run such horses within ken and under the very cognisance of Parisnath. Lucky is it for them, that his godship never opens his eyes to their doings. *

* Non-cruelty to animals is the grand doctrine both of the Buddhists and Jains. In a remarkable *sunnud* or document bearing the

Doomree is situated in a valley shut in by lofty rocks. The spot is rich in natural beauties. The country hereabouts is wilder and more rugged than any we have yet seen. It is one continued series of hills and dales, rocks and ravines, and crags and caverns—agitated and torn all over, as if nature had been under a mighty convulsion. Here and there, the road passes over wide-yawning ravines, through which during the rains sweep down headlong torrents to form the far-off rivers. Detached boulders lie strewn in all directions, and woods of a dark imbrowned hue cover every inch of the land—forming those abodes of everlasting shade which are scarcely penetrated by the sun. In the distance rise monstrous masses that nature has piled one upon another in every mode of shapeless desolation. The table-land has reached here its highest elevation. This labyrinth of hills and jungles is not without its own attractions. The sublime and the awful largely enter into the ingredients of its character. But the sublime and the awful at last tire by their unbroken monotony. One misses the charm of a variegated landscape—the 'cottage peeping through the trees'—the 'waving cornfields'—the 'lowing herds'—the 'whistling plough-boy'—all, in short, to awaken interest or sympathy. The scene, no doubt, has its grandeur and magnificence

bonâ fide seal of Akber, which has recently come to light, the name under which Parisnath was known in that emperor's age appears to have been *Somed Sekhur*. This whole hill, together with others in Behar and Guzerat, was granted to and bestowed upon Heer Bijoy Soor Acharya, the then pontiff of the Setamburry Jain sect, by Akber. They were given in perpetuity; and there is an especial clause prohibiting the killing of animals either on, below, or about the hills,

—but it is a solitary grandeur, and a 'dread magnificence.'

The hills always have a rich treat in store in a good first-view—when they break upon one for the first time in all their unrivalled sublimity. There they stand, ever the same as when the eyes of the first man permitted to have a sight of them gazed upon their majestic heights, defying winds and storms, and even old Time himself. But gradually they take off the edge of the appetite, till at last we feel to have 'supped full on horrors' and hills.

To this day, as some thirty years ago, when Jacquemont travelled through these regions, 'there is scarcely to be observed a house in a day's journey.' The wild tract is not fit for the abode of man. Not even the poor Santhal thinks of rearing a hut in these rocky solitudes. Particular spots remain perhaps in the same state as on the day of creation. Ages have rolled away, and yet the steps of man have not trod upon them, nor the stroke of the spade hath changed a single item in their features.

No doubt that, in the abundance of vegetation all around us, there are thou, nds of shrubs and trees, the use of which is yet unknown to man. How is a modern botanist at a loss to reconcile with old Moses' account all this vegetation, the seeds of which alone would have freighted Noah's whole ark. Near the foot of the hills was a solitary man cutting away wood for fuel. He has nearly filled up a cart-load. It has cost him only his labour, and he shall go to the next bazar to sell the

wood for the necessaries of life. Of the waste-lands spreading on all sides, much is now suffered to be common property by use, if not by right. No *bunkur* revenue is derived from them yet. The proprietors, therefore, connive at the trespasses of cattle browzing, or cutting wood, or hunting for birds or honey-combs on the lands, the value of which they would fain see to have been increased by such trespasses.

Though the bears and tigers formerly infesting these regions have greatly diminished, still the traveller is not without apprehensions of their turning up in his path. Not many years ago, a number of passengers were coming down the road after dark. There was a Hindoostanee, who happened to go ahead of the company by a few steps, carrying slung across his shoulders a *lotah* fastened to his club. A tiger, lurking near the road, suddenly sprang upon and ran off with him to the woods. It was vain to have attempted a rescue in the dark night; and the poor Hindoostanee was carried away—the clink of his brass-pot being distinctly heard, as he was dragged to the bush over the rugged ground.

Only last year, an up-country gentleman fell in with a bear. It was a hot day, and the animal had been tempted from his den by the outside cool air of the evening. The brute lay straight across the road. Luckily it was not quite dark, and Bruin could be distinctly seen stretched out in his hideous length, from some fifty or sixty yards off. The horse shied, and would not move forward a step. The coachman began to blow hard on his horn. But Bruin cared not to obstruct the public

thoroughfare. Finding the shaggy monster loath to remove, the gentleman, at his wits' end, thought proper to get up on the top of the gharry, to make himself scarce from the reach of the foe. In this ticklish position, at a gloomy hour, and amid a gloomy scene, he remained at a stand-still for full twenty minutes. It pleased at last Mr Bruin to get himself upon his legs, and shaking the dust off from his body, to go slowly past down the slope of the road, when way was made to speed on as fast as possible.

Rarely, however, are such unwelcome tenants of the forest now encountered on the road. The frequent resort of men and merchandise have scared them away to the more impervious thickets and deep-retired dells, which they are seldom tempted to quit. The tender care of a paternal Government for the safety o f travellers has placed *chowkeys* and *serais* at intervals of every two or three miles. There are scouts to watch at night from *machauns*, or cock-lofts, posted along the road. On these *machauns* is perched a tiny hut of reeds and leaves, sufficient to admit a man and his bedding—and up there creeps the *paharadar* after dusk to spend the night in keeping a look-out after the travellers. 'Indeed, law and police, trade and industry, do far more than people of romantic dispositions will readily admit, to develop in our minds a sense of the wilder beauties of nature. A traveller must be freed from all apprehension of being killed or starved before he can be charmed by the bold outlines and rich tints of the hills.' It shall be a great day for India, when the progress of cultiva-

tion shall extirpate the races of its wild beasts, and when the last tiger roaming the land shall be slain and preserved as a curiosity for posterity.

The mile-stones give as it were a tongue to distance, and the Electric Telegraph, passing through the heart of the forest, carries our voice 'from Indus to the pole.'

After running for twenty miles in a continuous succession, the hills recede for a time, and are succeeded by an open valley, in which a line of huts is honoured with the name of a serai. Halted to bathe and breakfast. The third tank on this side of Raneegunge is seen in this valley. Towards evening the hills again made their appearance. The alternation of steeps and ravines that now succeeded made the journey very toilsome, and not a little dangerous. The doctor and the tradesman, coming together in one gharry, narrowly escaped a serious accident. They were coming down the road over a declivity. The gharry, which at such places rolls with a partial impetus of its own, forced the horse out of the road, where it had a bend. Fortunately, the driver had presence of mind to rein up the horse, and the servants on the top gave the alarm to jump out of the carriage. Had the gharry rolled into the bottom of the ravine, it would have been all over with our friends. Quite a similar accident befell a native gentleman coming up last year from Calcutta to Benares. He was travelling with his wife and child in the same gharry. Somehow or other it got upset, and slided down into the ravine. Indeed, nobody was

actually killed, but the poor lady rose with a fractured shoulder-bone, and the child severely bruised. It is particularly unsafe to cross the causeways slightly protected by fences of stone loosely piled up, not even breast-high, and one foot deep. A prank of the horse on one of these causeways is sure to terminate in a fatal plunge into the awful chasm below.

Some of the spurs, abutting almost on the very road, seemed to obstruct the passage in the distance. It was near the close of the day. But a sunset among the hills is very different from a sunset behind the fantastic clouds of an autumn evening in the horizon of Calcutta. There, the parting day

> 'Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
> With a new colour as it gasps away,
> The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.'

Here, the sun no sooner sinks behind the hills than they throw their tall shadows on the ground, and excluding every ray, envelop the scene in a sudden gloom. The luminary is not allowed to cast 'a longing, lingering look behind.' He sinks plumb down, and all is dark in a minute or two.

Arrived at *Belcoopee* an hour after nightfall. The place is interesting for some hot-springs, which lie about 300 yards from the road. A Brahmin volunteered to conduct us to the spot. But night was not the proper time for exploration through the jungles. In the opinion of our valiant tradesman, to alight from the carriage in the jungles after dark is to step right into the maw of a tiger.

The Burrakutta is 'a little naiad which mourns her impoverished urn all summer long.' The 'magnificent topes of mango, banyan, and peepul trees' at Bursote are probably the remains of an ancient seat of the Buddhists or Jains.

Burhee is the principal station in the hill-districts along the Grand Trunk Road. But we arrived there too late in the night to see anything. Our friends had again fallen a great way off in the rear. Not till after an hour was heard the smack upon smack of a whip in the distance, when their gharry approached most like an apparition in the pale moonlight.

From Burhee the road lies over the *Dunwah Pass.* The horse needs here the aid of coolies to push up the carriage from its back. The Pass is 1525 feet above the level of the sea. Few prospects surpass in grandeur and loveliness the prospect which is enjoyed from the heights of Dunwah, and one must take care not to miss it, like ourselves.

October 23.—Rising early at dawn, we found ourselves to have cleared the Pass. Out of it, we were also out of the jurisdiction of the hills. These now appeared to have receded far away in the distance. The table-land has terminated here. Stopping to look back, the elevated plateau struck the eye as an impregnable stronghold of nature. The Dunwah Pass is from this side the only inlet—the Thermopylæ—to this inaccessible region. It has lain locked up, while the neighbouring valleys and plains have acknowledged the dominion of man for centuries. Not until pinched by

necessity would an overgrown population seek to utilize the resources of this realm. One man to the square mile is at most its present population.

Falling into the open country, the traveller proceeds through the historic lands of ancient Maghada. Under this name the province was known for a series of ages. It first occurs so early as in the Atharvan-Ved,* and is met with so late as the seventh century, when Chinese pilgrims speak of it under the scarcely intelligible name of *Moki-a-to.* The present appellation of Behar is from Vihara, or a monastery of the Buddhists, whose most reputed convent was at Behar—the place where Buddha *obtained the law.*

Out of the rocky barriers, the country, sloping away imperceptibly, at last resumes its dead level character. Rich prospects open to the view. But no traditions lend a charm to a journey through these regions,—no townships of consequence occur,—no spot furnishes a legend,—and no river is consecrated by a reminiscence. The plains announce themselves by the crops standing upon them. Bengal is the great country of paddy, Behar of pulse.

Reached *Barrak*—where are a bungalow and a serai. The country hereabouts is a flat open plain. But the scarcity of water is a serious evil, which is apparent in the scanty cultivation, and the clotted hairs and dirty

* 'We give Takman (a disease) as a messenger, as a treasure to the Gandharis, the Mujavats, to the Angas and *Maghadas.*' Atharvan-Ved. The Angas had their abode about Bhagulpore, and the Maghadas in South Behar. At the time this hymn was composed the country beyond the Soane was considered not strictly Indian.

habiliments of the people. Not a trace of that element is to be discovered for many miles around. The mountain-torrents draining the tract leave off their beds after the rains. There occur no fens and marshes, as in the sea-level districts of Lower Bengal. Cranes and herons are birds unknown here. In the whole serai is a single well. The crowd round this well presents an animated scene. Groups of tall Beharee women pass and repass there the whole day with pitchers on their heads. Their foreheads are painted with vermilion, and adorned with rows of coins and beads. One or two of them might not be unworthy of a reputation for beauty.

Nearly a whole poultry was killed this morning to get up our breakfast—the sacrifice well chiming with the ceremonies of this Hindoo *Nobomee-Poojah* day. Beyond the mountains and deserts that separate us, our relatives and friends are sacrificing goats and buffaloes to Doorga; we here are imitating Socrates in paying off the debt of fowls.

The arrival of a doctor had got bruited in the serai. As we sat on a charpoy, enjoying the luxury of a leisurely smoke at the *hooka* after breakfast, a man made his appearance with a little boy on his arms. The poor child, hardly two years old, was turned sallow, and wasted with a fever almost to the very bones. He had several amulets and spells hanging from his neck. No pains had been spared to treat the boy with all the medicines in the pharmacopœia of the local peasantry. The doctor, patiently listening to the long tale of the father, examined the boy, and, after making the dia-

gnosis, was sorry to have only a few grains of quinine to spare to the boy.

There are about two hundred shops and huts in the serai, all facing each other in two long rows on the two sides of the road. The population is some three to four hundred souls. You are now in Behar, and hardly observe a man with a bare head, or hear anybody speak a word of the Bengalee language. Poverty of food easily accounts for the ill-developed growth of the men living in this mountainous clime. From a failure of the rains, they express grave apprehensions of a famine. Coarse rice, wheat, pulse, raw sugar, and one or two kinds of vegetable, are all the items in the commissariat of this bazar.

Outwardly, the Goolsukree and Lelajan are now quite dry streams. But an under-current always percolates their sandy beds. Four or five years ago the bridge over the Lelajan went down by the weight of a large number of pilgrims passing over it to Juggernauth, and to this day it is remaining in its broken state. The Lelajan is better known to the Hindoo under the name of Fulgoo. The banished Rama, with Seeta and Luchmun, had retired to a spot upon its bank. One day, when the two brothers had gone out to the forest in search of fruit, a voice from heaven warned their deceased father to make haste to Swerga, or otherwise the gates of that blessed region would be fast barred and bolted against his approach. In all haste the spirit of Rajah Dasarath repaired to the spot where his sons lived in exile. Finding them away

from home, he requested Seeta to do the needful in their absence. The daughter-in-law hesitated to officiate in the duty of her husband. She, moreover, pleaded the absolute want of the wherewithal to perform the ceremony. But Dasarath urged the jeopardy of his beatitude as the consequence of delay, and enjoined Seeta to offer a *pind* (funeral cake) of sand in lieu of rice. She kept as witnesses the river Fulgoo, a Brahmin, a *toolsee* plant, and a *banyan* tree, to justify her proceedings under a necessity that admitted of no procrastination. On the return of the brothers, Seeta related to them the adventure of their father. But Rama disbelieving her, she called upon Fulgoo to bear its testimony. The river kept mute, and was cursed to lose its stream. The Brahmin and the *toolsee* plant, failing to give a faithful evidence, were respectively doomed—the one to be a mendicant, and the other to suffer from the urinary abomination of dogs and cats. The *banyan* tree alone confirmed the truth of Seeta's story, and was blessed to have a long life and perennial vigour. Originally the Lelajan was a sacred river of the Buddhists, on account of Buddha's ablutions in that stream. It is identified with the 'Nirajuna' of the Thibetan Buddhists. But on the triumph of the Brahmins, the Pouranic authors claimed it as a holy river of their own, and connected it with fables, the invention of which has effaced all remembrance of its previous Buddhistical sanctity. Here and there, in the dry bed of the stream, are small pools of limpid water. Howbeit, its extra-aqueous properties, its immediate benefit

of a delicious beverage in a hot sun, are beyond question.

Towards *Shergotty* the road is lined with trees. Literally interpreted, Shergotty means the Tiger Pass. Fifty years ago travellers had to hire tom-tom men to keep off the tigers infesting the road. The town stands on a narrow slip of land separating the Boodiah from the Morhur. Compared with the desolate hill-tracts, this is a swarming hive of men. It is on this side of the hills, as Raneegunge is on the other. But it is not, like Raneegunge, a young town just emerging from its teens. It is an aged centenarian, bowed down with the weight of years and calamities, and with but a slight prospect of having new life and vigour breathed into it again. Its foundation dates, we think, from an early epoch. The place may have existed in the time of Ajata Satru, of Buddha, and of Asoca, though it is now difficult to ascertain the name by which it was then known. It may happen to be traced in Fa Hian, under a curious Chinese orthography. Shergotty was a large, populous, and flourishing town in the time of the Patan governors of Behar. Mention is made of it in the route of Meer Jumla to Rajmahal, when that Mogul general had been sent to attack Prince Shooja. The only remains of its antiquity are a few tombs and mosques. It is now slowly recovering from the effects of the depopulation in the great famine of 1770. Marks of that terrible calamity are borne even yet by the surrounding country, which is in a state of jungle.

From Shergotty, as from the centre of a radius,

diverge roads towards Calcutta, Hazareebaugh, Benares, and Gaya. The last place is a journey only of twenty miles. *Gaya* is Fa Hian's 'Kia-ye.' It is famous for the Hindoo Vishnupud. The great strength of the Gaya-Asura is but a figurative allusion to the great strength of the Buddhistic sect; and the story of all the divinities failing to subdue the monster till he was put down by the weight of Vishnu's foot is evidently an allegory of the final triumph of the Vishnuvites over the Buddhists, Brahminites, Shivites, and other sects. The Vishnupud is a rival counterpart of the impression of Buddha's foot—and Gaya and Boodh-Gaya, in each other's proximity, point out the alternate predominance of the antagonistic sects. The Vishnupud had been set up prior to Fa Hian's visit.

It is very singular with the Gayalese, that their widowers are barred the privilege of wiving after the death of their first wife, as Hindoo widows are barred the privilege of taking a husband after the death of their first lord. This is certainly putting the neck in the halter of one's own choice. It is man who has always played the tyrant over woman. Civilized Asia, as well as civilized Europe, has in all ages treated woman as the tendril, and man the tree, and taken advantage of the weaker sex to place her under a yoke of restriction. The custom of the Gayalese is without a precedent. It savours of the celibacy of the Buddhaic priests. The Gayalese may be regarded as demi-Brahmins and demi-Buddhists—Brahminical by birth and faith and Buddhistical by manners and customs. The

Jains, more like good mediators than heretics, tried but failed to effect a compromise between the two sects.

Shergotty abounds with many Gayalese scouts on the look-out for pilgrims. A gang of them had become very troublesome in offering to convey us to their sacred city. But the coz of our tradesman, becoming the spokesman of our company, out-swore, out-argued, and out-laughed them all, at the top of his voice. They had scarcely shown their backs, before another set of creatures demanded our notice. It was a collection of the lame, the leprous, the blind, and the decrepit,—most of whom were festering under raw and hideous sores, and exhibited a wasting from malady and want of food that threatened to terminate in a speedy consignment to the grave. All that is revolting or disgusting in disease and deformity was laid bare and exposed to the view, and the sight was too much for the nerves, which received a shock that discomposed us as much as we could have been by the sight of a man hauled up to the gallows. The most fearful object among them all was a woman who had lost both her lips, and showed a horrible array of teeth in a perpetual grin. The doctor felt an interest, which it is his vocation to do. But for us laymen, we made haste to retire from the scene by manifesting our sympathy by means of a little eleemosynary aid. The greater number of these wretched beings were but victims of their own vices. There is a secret even in the trade of beggary—there is a reason why so many beggars have collected themselves at this spot. It is because they have found it to their advantage to

make their stand at a place through which there is not a day that some men or other have not occasion to pass on to Gaya, distributing alms in their progress, and moralizing to the world that the path to heaven lies through the gateway of charity.

Night caused us to miss the antiquities of *Oomga*, which lies fourteen miles west of Shergotty, near the dawk-bungalow of Muddunpore. Once this was the seat of a branch of the old Pal kings of Bengal, but the spot is now quite deserted and in ruins. There is a temple of Juggernauth here 400 years old, and 60 feet high, founded by a Raja, Bhoyrub Indra, said to have been descended from a collateral branch of the Chandra-Vansa princes, and who, subverting the throne of the ancient dynasty, flourished subsequent to the period when the Rajpoot Chiefs of Central India made their crusades against the Buddhists of Gaya. The older *lingams* of Shiva, set up in this close neighbourhood to the scenes of Buddha's labours, are the first evidences of the encroachments of Shivaism over Buddhism.

October 24th.—The Soane! the Soane! the Hiranyabhya of the ancient Maghadas and Prachii,—and the Erranaboas of Arrian and Pliny, an identification that must silence all future dispute about the site of Palibothra, situated, as stated by Megasthenes, at the junction of the Ganges and Erranaboas. The majestic river lay stretched in its broad expanse—'dashing onwards its golden tribute bent to pay.' The bed, more than three miles wide, fully justifies the third-rate rank which the Greeks assigned to it among the Indian

rivers falling within their observation. Half the bed is now a dry waste of sand, over which the gharry had to be drawn by a team of four bullocks, while coolies pushed it from behind. The water has a clear, bluish appearance. As we crossed, a light breeze sprung up to break the glassy surface of the stream into beautiful crisps. The eye wandered over a lonely but charming valley, disclosing a varied scene of wooded hills and luxuriant valleys. The hills of Rotas, forming a noble background to the scene, and changing their appearance as we shifted our ground, were caught from several points of view.

The Nerbudda and the Soane were to have been married, says the legend. Like a true Hindoo bride and bridegroom, they had never seen each other, the one to woo, and the other to be won. The day of their nuptials arrived. Her majesty, the Nerbudda, became anxious to know what sort of a personage her affianced was, and she deputed a handmaid, by the name of Jhola, to bring her a report. Meanwhile, his majesty the Soane was approaching at the slow and stately pace of an Indian bridegroom. He met Jhola on the way, and was at once captivated—and she, 'nothing loath,' yielded to his caresses. The Queen was no sooner apprized, than she rushed forward in a towering passion, and with one foot sent the Soane rolling back to the east, whence he came, and with the other kicked little Jhola sprawling after him—resolving for herself to keep on a westernly course, and remain a virgin queen all her life. The truth of this fiction may well be seen at

Omerkuntuck, where the Nerbudda flows on to the west: the Soane, taking a westerly course for a few miles, turns off suddenly to the opposite direction, and is joined by the little stream of the Jhola before it descends the great cascade.

Deyree has a charming site upon a bold and lofty bank, immediately overlooking the river. A gun, mounted upon the walls of its intrenchment, points at the ghaut itself to protect it from hostile approach! The intrenchment calls to mind the days of the Mutiny. On the left shore of the Soane, we trod on the soil of ancient *Kikata*—the modern Shahabad.

From Deyree to *Rotas* is a trip of 20 miles. Personal observation confirms the truth of the impregnability of the hill-fort, the most celebrated in all Indian history. From all accounts Rotas is said to have been founded by Rohitas—though authorities differ as to the age in which he flourished.* Raja Nala—of *Nal Dum-*

* 'Rajah Harishchundra has no sons, and worships Varuna, in order to obtain a son, promising to sacrifice to him his first-born: he has a son in consequence, named *Rohita:* but when Varuna claims his victim, the king delays the sacrifice under various pretexts, from time to time, until Rohita attains adolescence, when his father communicates to him the fate for which he was destined: Rohita refuses submission, and spends several years in the forests, away from home: he at last meets there with Ajigartha, a Rishi, in great distress, and persuades him to part with his second son, Suneshepas, to be substituted for Rohita, as an offering to Varuna: the bargain is concluded, and Suneshepas is about to be sacrificed, when, by the advice of Viswamitra, one of the officiating priests, he appeals to the gods, and is ultimately liberated. (Aitareya Brahmana.) Menu alludes to the story, and says that Ajigartha incurred no guilt by giving up his son to be sacrificed, as it was to preserve himself and family from perishing with hunger.' This is one account from Wilson's translation of the Rig-Veda. The following is another. 'The Cuchawa or Cushwa race claims descent from Cush, the second son of Rama, king of

mun celebrity—losing his patrimonial inheritance of Rotas, and becoming a fugitive, met with all those reverses, the relation of which is the grand source of delight to all the Hindoos—and a soft-*sawder* to their princes in misfortune. The castle stands on a spur some 2000 feet high. Shere Shah's stratagem to make himself its master is very clever to read, but betrays the poverty of the military art in his age. The artificial works of Raja Maun to strengthen the castle have been in ruins for a long time. Out of fourteen gateways, Tieffenthaler saw that ten of them had been already walled up prior to his visit. In our own days, Ummer Sing held the neglected and ruinous fort of Rotas for several months against a strong British force.

No doubt, the future historian would hesitate to deny to Koer Sing and Ummer Sing, the valour and enterprising spirit which belong to the lineal descendant of the ancient Khetrya and Rajpoot. They were men worthy to have lived in a better age, and to have died in a better cause. By nature and fortune were they qualified to have distinguished themselves as historic characters. But in their infatuation they entered upon a bubble scheme, the bursting of which no sane man could doubt. They raised the standard for national independence, and anticipated that event at least two

Koshala, whose capital was in Ayodia, the modern Oude. Cush, or some of his immediate offspring, is said to have migrated from the parental abode, and erected the celebrated castle of Rotas, or Rohitas, on the Soane, whence, in the lapse of generations, another distinguished scion, Raja Nal, migrated westward, and in A.D. 295, founded the kingdom and city of Nurwar, or classically Nishida.'—*Tod's Rajasthan*, vol. ii. p. 346.

centuries before its time. We have to learn much before we ought to hazard a leap. The world has grown much wiser since the times of the patriarch monarchs and legislators, and India can no longer be expected to relapse into the days of a Brahmin ascendancy, or a Mahratta government—a state in which rights are strong, and law weak. The advent of the Anglo-Saxon race was not merely fortuitous, but had been fore-ordained in the wisdom of Providence. First of all, our efforts should be to shake off the fetters which a past age has forged for us, to effect our freedom from moral disabilities; and not to stake the well-being of the country on the result of a contest between ploughmen unused to shoulder a musket, and veteran soldiers who have marched triumphant into Paris, Canton, and Candahar. Nothing less than Hindoostan ought to be given away to the English in grateful reward for their introducing the *art of printing*, which is emancipating thousands of minds from the yoke of a superstition that held us as brutes for centuries.

Three years ago, how high the popularity of Koer Sing in these quarters was. The tocsin of his name sounded in the ears of the peasantry, and they left the plough to run to his standard. So far away as in our own household, there was a Beharee bearer who used to be busy every morning in wrestling and other gymnastics. The crotchet entered his head, that he would one day be called upon to serve in the ranks of Koer Sing's army. In time, however, the poor fellow was laughed out of his infatuity by his fellow-menials.

facements of freestone. Inside, the walls are plastered like polished marble. Time has dimmed their lustre by laying on a crust of dirt upon them. Our voice, resounding in echoes beneath the dome, scared away a number of pigeons that were perched on the cornices, and to whom the place seems to be abandoned. The sarcophagus is placed just in the middle of the ground-floor. Though a little too much ornamented, the general design of the building is simple. The date of the tomb is A. D. 1531. But excepting a slab or two that is out of place, the whole edifice is yet in a very good condition.

From the top of the Roza, the town, spread out beneath the feet, can be seen in detail. Towards the north the tomb of Shere Shah appeared to rear itself in the air from out of an artificial lake. In form and design it is much the same as that of his father; but it is loftier in height, larger in dimensions, and more superb in appearance. Rising in an open uninterrupted plain, the effect also is more telling.

> 'From 'midst a limpid pool, superbly high,
> The massy dome obtrudes into the sky,
> Upon the banks more humble tombs abound,
> Of faithful servants, who their chief surround.
> The monarch still seems grandeur to dispense,
> And e'en in death, maintains pre-eminence.'

The tank, which once measured a mile in circumference, has decayed into a cesspool; the stone-enfacements have all slipped down into the reservoir; the causeway to the tomb is dilapidated; only a cemetery or two remains of the 'humble tombs of the faithful servants, —the rest are all prostrate upon the ground, and disap-

pearing every autumn to fill up the tank. Cremation left no choice to the Hindoos for such splendid obituary monuments and 'storied urns.' Shere Shah himself caused the erection of this tomb—distrusting, perhaps, his immediate survivors, posterity, tradition, history, and everything, to do him adequate justice. It is remarkable that he did not prefer to build a palace, but his tomb. He was killed by the explosion of a mine at the fort of Callinger. Only his little finger was found—and that alone lies interred beneath the stately mausoleum, which is the ornament of the valley of the Soane. In another generation or two, this tomb may 'leave not a trace behind.' The utilitarian economy which appreciates only reproductive works, is sadly mistaken to consign to decay the costly works of a preceding age. To abolish all ornamental works would be to question the beauty of the stars and flowers—the general loveliness of nature in the creation.

No more useful work, nor a more splendid monument of his glory, could have been left behind by Shere Shah, than the highway which stretched a four months' journey from Sonargong in Bengal to the western Rotas on the Jhelum, and compared with which the Grand Trunk Road of our age falls into the shade. Had that road existed, as his rupee coinage is still current, it would have saved the fifty lacs expended on the present thoroughfare. In many places that road had remained for fifty-two years much in the same state as when originally founded. To this day the remains of one of his stone and brick-built serais may be seen at

Jehanabad, some fourteen miles from Sasseram. But Shere Shah in his turn must yield the palm to Asoca, who made highways, regularly milestoned and shaded with peepul and mango trees, throughout his kingdom, dug wells at the distance of every cross, erected dhurmsalas for the use of man and beast, hospitals for the sick, and rest-houses for the wayworn at night.

The country improves as you approach Benares. The road to that city is under a beautiful avenue. Shere Shah's tomb is visible from many miles off—a very good proof of the flat, level character of the country. We met a European lady travelling alone with her child. She dared not have done this three years ago, when she was sure to have been beset, like Milton's Lady in the Comus, by lots of *budmashes*.

To the Hindoos, the Caramnassa is the very antipodes of the Ganges. Not more does a dip in the river flowing from Shiva's head insure salvation, than is perdition threatened to be the consequence of the same act in the other river. In days gone by the ferryman had need of especial care against raising a splash by the oar, and jeopardizing the eternal welfare of the passengers. Poor people, who could not afford for ferrying, were forded on the shoulders of men—the touch of a drop of the cursed waters was imperilling enough. No such step has to be taken now. The munificence of a wealthy Hindoo—Raja Putni Mull of Benares*—has

*' The same re-built a temple at Muttra, which cost 70,000 Rupees, made a stone tank there at a cost of three lacs, a well at Jwala-mukhi, which cost 90,000 Rs.; he spent 90,000 Rs. on a ghaut at Hurdwar; 60,000 Rs. on a Serai at Brindabun: on these and other public works he spent eight lacs of rupees, for which Lord W. Bentinck made him a Raja. He has recorded, in four languages, on this bridge, the fact

raised a substantial bridge of stone over the river, to which in former years extended the frontiers that have in our day been pushed up to Peshawur. The Caramnassa is 300 feet wide, and rises 30 feet in the rains. The sand in its bed is 20 feet deep.

The real tradition is lost which has laid the Caramnassa under a ban, and in its place has been invented the following legend. The aspiring Rajah Trisanku had exalted himself among the gods, by his prayers and penances. But he was kicked out headlong from Swerga by Shiva, and arrested half-way in his fall, where he remains suspended—tugged this way by gravitation, and to the other drawn by the merit of his penances. He lies with his head downward, and his saliva falling into the Caramnassa is the cause of its desecration. The legend, if good for nothing else, is an apt illustration of the position of Young Bengal. The religious prayers and penances of the one might be taken for the education and enlightenment of the other. Longing after Swerga might be interpreted into a longing for the privileges of the conqueror—and expulsion is another word for exclusion. The wrath of Shiva is akin to the exterminating principle of the Blood-and-Scalp-School members. And hanging in the air is illustrative of that midway position, in which an educated Hindoo is placed between his orthodox countrymen on the one hand, and the race of his conquerors on the other.

of his erecting it; the foundation had been previously laid by the prime minister of Poona, who spent three lacs on it. The bridge was designed by James Prinsep.'—*Calcutta Review, No. XLI.*

CHAPTER VI.

October 25th.—It was past four in the morning. The driver awoke us, and announced the tidings of our arrival before *Benares*. In a few minutes we were upon the river-side, straining our eyes to catch a glimpse of the Holy City that rests upon the trident of Mahadeo. But a soft murky gloom still hung upon the prospect, and we could descry only the shadowy outlines of the city upon the opposite bank. The Ganges, flowing past below it, 'glided at her own sweet will.' From her surface rose misty exhalations, as if in incense to the wrathful Deity of the Hindoo Pantheon. The mighty city lay hushed in repose, excepting the sounds of the *nagara* from some temple, that came mellowed across the waters, and fell in a pleasing cadence upon the ear. As daylight gradually poured itself, thousands of spires, temples, shrines, minarets, domes, palaces, and ghauts, were laid bare to the sight—disclosing a most panoramic view. The city of Shiva, the great stronghold of Hindooism, the holiest shrine for pilgrimage in India, and the nucleus of the wealth, grandeur, and fashion of Hindoostan, now clearly stood out in view,—'rising with her tiara of proud towers, into airy

distance.' From having heard, and read, and dreamt of Benares for many a year, we now gazed upon that city, and realized the longings into which one is led by its prestige.

The first view is magnificent, and answers all expectations. The lofty bank, and the graceful bend of the river—in the form of a half moon, give to Benares the advantage of being seen drawn out in all its length, and presented in all its details. In Bishop Heber's opinion, one has a very good view of Benares from a boat. But seen from the opposite bank, the city 'looks right glorious.' From there, the photographer can at once take in the whole river-frontage from one end to the other—summed up of flighty ghauts lining the entire length of the bank, and a close array of buildings and temples, each jostling, as it were, to peep one over the other's head.

Doubtless, the elevated site of Benares upon a high steepy bank, has given rise to the story of its being founded on the trident of Shiva, and its exemption from the shock of all earthquakes. But it is to be doubted whether old Biseswara did not feel a quake at the explosion occurring some ten years ago, when a fleet of boats carrying ammunition happened to take fire below the Raj-ghaut. It is next to a certainty that he must have had a proof then of his abode upon the terra-firma —of his city being of 'the earth earthy.'

Not a little interesting feature in the landscape is the river. The right side, too, has its beauties to attract the eye. It had been designed to found a rival city

upon this bank, and call it Vyas-Kasi. The design originated not, as it has been mystified in the Poorans, on the part of Vyas to avenge his personal wrongs and insults on the Shivites, but on the part of the Vishnuvites themselves, to establish the pre-eminence of their sect by aiming a deadly blow at the power of their opponents. It was not Vyas who had been ill-received and ill-treated at Benares, but it was the Vishnuvites who had been opposed and denied a footing in the city so devoted to Shiva. In the conflict waged between the two great sects of the Hindoo world, each party has always sought to strengthen the cause of its superstition by the sanction of great names. There is no name so venerated in the Hindoo Shastras as that of the compiler of the Ved-Sanghitas. By that name is the sect of the Vishnuvites honoured at its head, and its veteran authority was quoted to lend a countenance to their proceedings in the foundation of a new Kasi on the right bank of the Ganges. But sentimental Vishnuvism failed to draw away men from a superstition which promised immediate gratification to their fleshly cravings, and no rival Vishnuvite town ever rose on the opposite bank of Benares to threaten the religious dominancy of the Shivites. Failing in their ambitious project, the Vishnuvites became the laughing-stock of their adversaries. They were taunted with being metamorphosed into asses on their death at their much-vaunted town. The nucleus of that city has become the country-seat of the Rajah of Benares. But he takes the most punctilious care not jeopardize his soul in that accursed

spot. In his last moments he is carried over to the other side, which is considered to form the nearest point to heaven. Under this impression of the Hindoos, the bridge of boats connecting Benares with the opposite bank might with good reason be taken for a veritable *Pons Asinorum*.

The bridge in question has just begun to be laid across. In the interim of its ceasing to exist, during the height of the rains, there plies the ferry of a little steamer paddled by men. The Ganges at Benares now is not more than two-thirds of the breadth of the Hooghly. But in the rains it becomes nearly ninety feet deep, and flows with a current of eight miles an hour.

Landed at the Rajghaut. Alexander was not more eager to leap on the shores of Ilion than an orthodox Hindoo is to do the same on the holy shore of Benares. We proceeded on foot to see the city. The view from the other side really deserves the epithet of magnificent. But much of the prestige vanishes away on landing on this side, and the gay and glittering city proves to be one of shocking filth and abominations.

Travellers describe Benares as 'characteristically Eastern.' They are thrown here 'on purely Oriental scenes.' Indeed, the city has no parallel in the East or the West. It is thoroughly Hindoo—from its Hindoo *muts*. and *mundeers*, its Hindoo idols and emblems of worship, its *toles*, or seminaries, of Hindoo learning, its denizens of pure Hindoo faith and manners, and last, but not least, its shops of Hindoo *confectionery*. Every-

thing here savours of the Hindoo, and a foreigner beholds in it a *bonâ fide* Hindoo town, distinguished by its peculiarities from all other towns upon the earth.

To quote the words of the poet, 'four thousand years expand their wings' over Benares. It is the oldest *post-diluvian* city on the globe. Nineveh, Babylon, and others had been its contemporaries. But they are all in desolation, while Benares is still in its glory. The cities of the *Allophylians* are now without even a name—much less without a trace. The cities of the *Aryans* have shared nearly the same fate. Benares is the only town of pre-historic antiquity that yet survives to link the ancient world with the modern, and present a retrospect through a vista of several hundred years.

But old as Benares is, it has not the hoary look about it, the time-worn visage and decrepit appearance, of an aged millenarian. It has no architectural vestiges of the times of Judisththira or Vicramadytia to 'write wrinkles upon its brow.' The oldest building dates only from the age of Akbar. Ruled by different princes at different epochs, it had to assume a different phase on each occasion. The present appearance is obviously modernized. The mixed Hindoo and Saracenic order prevailing in its architecture, decidedly points to a recent origin of the present city. If Buddha were to see it now, he would not know one temple or street, and would find it crowded with idols where there used to be none. Megasthenes would not recognize it under its present features. Fa Hian would behold it as entirely changed in its site, magnitude, topography, architecture,

and other details. Hwen Thsang also would be struck by many noveltics that did not exist in the seventh century. Originally, Benares had been called Kasi. Very probably its founder Khetroviddya had conferred this name upon his favourite city. Under that name it had continued to be called for several ages—from the date of its foundation to the times of Buddha, Asoca, and Fa Hian in the fifth century. Of Benares when it was called Kasi, or in the age of the Maharabat or of Menu, no topographical account is extant. In the early times of the Rig-Veda it must have hardly begun to exist. But in the age of the great Hindoo Code it seems to have attained some importance and dignity, and to have become the great national seat of learning, where the means of acquiring knowledge were abundant, and where the opportunities of vigorous intellectual exercise were frequent. Here, probably, did Kapila first enunciate his doctrines of the *Sankhya*. Here, probably, did Gotuma found his school of the *Nyaics*. Yaska probably published his 'Nirukta' at this place, Panini his Grammar, and Kulluca Bhutto his 'Commentaries on the Institutes.' No doubt is to be entertained that in ancient Kasi were to be found the most eminent Hindoo sages, who greatly enriched the literature of their nation, and who were qualified by genius, learning, and eloquence to guide the councils of kings, to mould the opinions of the public of ancient India, and to give law to the Hindoo world. Unless Benares had enjoyed a classic fame, been inhabited by a large and intelligent population, and had exercised the authority of a pontifical

city, it was not likely that it would have been chosen by Buddha as the fittest theatre for first 'turning the wheel of his law' among mankind.

The *Kasi-khund* professes to give an account of ancient Benares. But it harps more upon Shiva than upon Shiva's abode. There is one little Tamul drama,* which helps to give an insight into the state of things in the olden times. In that drama the poet makes the exiled Rajah Harishchundra burst forth in admiration of Benares, as a gorgeous city of 'splendid turrets, princely mansions, and millions of pinnacles.' One is at first apt to take this account as referring to a period some eighteen hundred years on the other side of Christ, the probable age of Harishchundra; but the traveller eighteen hundred years on this side of Christ finds it the self-same magnificent city of temples and turrets. But it is very much to be doubted whether in that early age Benares could have grown into such a great and opulent city—an age the same with that of the Rig-Veda, 'when temples and public places of worship' were unknown on the plains of India.† The anachronism is glaring, and the poet must be construed as having described the city such as it was in the centuries immediately preceding the Mahomedan invasion. In his own age, the fourteenth century, the city had undergone great changes. By that time the name of Kasi had been long dropped for that of Benares. It is

* 'Arichundra, the Martyr of Truth,' translated into English by Mutu Coomar Swamy Mudelier.

† 'The worship was entirely domestic.'—Wilson's Rig-Veda.

a coinage of the Puranic authors, and must have been adopted in the Puranic age. Purely it is Baranasi, from Barana and Asi, the two rivers between which the city is situated. By a wrong orthography, it has become transformed into Benares. Only dry beds of those rivers are seen in this season. The change of name appears to have occurred subsequent to Fa Hian's visit, in whose time the place still retained its ancient appellation. It is probable that ancient Kasi fell into ruins on the expulsion of the first Buddhists from its possession. To rebuild it, the Shivites chose a new site, but not far removed from the old. Their city rose and extended from the Barana to the Asi, and no more appropriate name could have been bestowed upon it than that of Benares, which was dedicated to their patron deity Shiva. Then commenced the era from which Benares became the battle-ground of the different sects of the Hindoos, and the scene of their alternate victory and defeat—till its complete desolation by invaders of a new creed from regions beyond the Indus.

We should greatly err if we were to suppose that any of the present streets and houses bear the same aspect that they did in the age of Buddha, or Fa Hian, or Sancara. Much of the site now occupied along the river was a 'forest' in Baber's time. Jungles stood and wolves prowled over the space now covered by a long succession of ghauts and temples. In those jungles the Tamul poet has laid the most touching scenes of his drama. The residence of Toolsee Doss—the *mut* of Ramanund over the Punchogunga ghaut, then peeped

through coverts and shades of trees. The present city is not more than three hundred years old. It first began to recover its ancient splendour about the year 1570, under the auspices of Rao Sorjun of Boondi, a Rajpoot chief who had been intrusted by Akbar with the government of Benares. By the prudence of his administration and the vigilance of his police, the most perfect security to person and property was established throughout the province. The city was beautified and ornamented, especially the quarter of his residence, with eighty edifices, and twenty baths.* Just as Fitch saw it in 1583, just as Tavernier saw it in 1668, so did Heber see it in 1825, and so do we see it in 1860: though not without missing many things that have ceased to exist in the interval.

Immediately above the Raj-ghaut, and at the confluence of the Barana and Ganges, is the site of the old Benares fort. The spot forms a great strategical position, and recalls to mind the history of ages. In Menu's time Benares was one of the six independent kingdoms in the valley of the Ganges. The Hindoo fort, overlooking that river, guarded its capital in those days from the approach of Panchala from the west, and from the approach of Maghada from the east. Inside the fort then stood the palace of the king. Troops of men, with brilliant sabres and iron-bound clubs, protected the royal household. The gates of the citadel were guarded by pikemen bearing a long spear, scimitar, and a buckler. Those who performed duty on the

* Tod's Rajasthan, vol. ii. p. 474.

turrets were armed with bows which shot an arrow six feet long. The cavalry, riding upon high-mettled horses, curvetted in all directions. Richly-caparisoned elephants—'their protruding tusks armed with keen sabres'—were driven about, and made a splendid show. Gay cars and war-chariots ran hither and thither through the streets. From this fort poured forth of old the warriors who went to assist the Pandoos on the plains of Kurukhetra. The lieutenants of the Maghada kings lodged in this fort. Rajah Deva Pala Deva, the great Buddhist king of Gour, and his successors, held court here on the second ascendancy of their faith in Benares. The province then passed into the hands of the Rathore kings of Kanouge. The last Rajah, Jychand, had deposited all his valuables here. But the city of weak-nerved priests and pundits could ill resist the attack of the hardy Ghorians. The treasures, accumulated in the fort, fell an easy prey to the Moslem. There was a white elephant, which formed the most remarkable of all spoils. Such an animal is now a myth. In the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, the space enclosed by the walls of the fort swarmed with houses and temples. Various ruins of them are still existing, particularly the remains of a Buddhistic Vihara, or temple, probably of the Gupta or Pal period. An accumulation of soil has taken place, raising the ground by many feet. Buildings, which must have been once on the surface, are now eighteen feet below ground. These are probably the remains of the city existing in the remote anti-Christian centuries.

In lieu of the ancient Hindoo citadel, there tower now the high mud ramparts of a fort, which was erected to command the city in the crisis of the late rebellion.

The main road from the Raj-ghaut passes through what had been a thickly-inhabited quarter of the ancient city—the site of old Benares. Here, first of all, were the dwellings of the learned Brahmins. Loud rose then 'the voices of their students reciting the Vedas in the halls of learning.'* Here of yore did 'the twang of the bow and the clash of the swords bespeak the royal residences of the Khetryas.' Here were 'the wealthy mansions of the Vaisas, their shops and stalls extending in endless rows.' Money-changers there were, in whose shops 'the constant clink of the great heaps of gold and silver coin that were counted made its metallic chorus heard even amidst the din and commotion caused by the numberless buyers and sellers.'† Here, for several centuries, stood many a temple and monastery of the Buddhists. The old city seems to have been more inland than the present. It may be that, partly owing to the caprices of Indian rivers, and partly to political and religious causes, the town has had to shift its site from time to time. It is to be regretted that almost no antiquities exist to preserve the memory of the spot where Buddha turned the wheel of his law—where Bhascara held his commerce with the skies—and where Sancara encountered the atheistical

* There were 700 seminaries at Kasi when Buddha went there to propagate his religion.

† 'Arichandra,' Act v. Scene i.

Buddhists at all the weapons of controversy, and routed them from off the field. The interesting arena is bare of every vestige of the early Brahminic and Buddhistic epochs. The tower in honour of Buddha, which was to have been seen in Ajata Satru's time, has long disappeared. The thirty monasteries spoken of by Hwen Thsang have all ceased to exist for several centuries. The locality is now thinly peopled, and gradually fades away into the suburban country-seats and gardens of the rich.

In making a tour *riâ* the outskirts, one involuntarily performs that *nugur-parikrama*, or the circuit of the city, which is so meritorious in Hindoo pilgrimage. Falling into the heart of the town, we had to thread our way through a maze of alleys and lanes. These are so narrow, that 'even narrow seems a term too wide for them.' The high rows of buildings on either hand exclude all sunshine and ventilation from the streets, and the man living perched on the topmost garret is as much grilled by heat during day as he on the ground-floor has to bid farewell to the sun in his mid-day career. Their case, however, is reversed at night, when the latter feels stowed close, as it were in a ship-hold—while the former, at his breezy height, is courted by Eolus from the four cardinal points of heaven.

The architecture of a people depends upon the materials afforded by the country in which they inhabit. In the plains of Bengal, where not a hillock is to be seen, and where the soil is alluvial, the material for

its architecture is brick. But in Benares an inexhaustible supply of sandstone is found within an easy reach in the adjacent hills of Chunar. Hence this more durable material is employed by the Khottas in their buildings. The same that was said of Rome—which Augustus found all brick, but left all marble—may be said of Benares, which is all stone.

But one, judging from the buildings in Benares, would not form a very high opinion of Hindoo architecture. Though possessing a lofty and attractive frontage, there is not one house which is to be admired for its real architectural excellency. The taste, if any is at all exhibited, appears to have been frittered away upon elaborateness and minute elegance. There is no stately column—no magnificent arch, to produce the effect of solemn grandeur. Far from anything of the kind, small verandahs and galleries, oriel windows and brackets, carved pillars and sculptured walls, are in universal fashion. The pyramidal domes of the temples are particularly ungraceful. Our Bengalee temples, with their rounded cupolas, are in much better taste. The Buddhists appear to have had more architectural genius than the Brahmins. Most of the houses are six to seven stories high, each story being ten to twelve feet in elevation. This dominionizing in the air is certainly for being pinched for space below. The houses have small courts, round which the rooms are built, little larger than pigeon-holes. The lower rooms are as dark as cells. The doors are so low, that you are obliged to stoop to pass through them. The windows are few and

small. In a wall a hundred feet long there are scarcely more than four or five openings. To have little light and air in domestic architecture is perhaps a suggestion of the local climate, which is beyond measure severe and trying, as well in winter as in summer. In Bengal the ladies live in separate apartments adjoining to those of the men, in one enclosure. But in Benares they have their zenanas high up on the sixth or seventh floor. 'By thus bearing their female world upon their shoulders, the Khottahs of Benares may outdo the chivalry of Bengal. But for all that, their women fare not the better. Perched high upon their aerial substratum, they are so much roasted during the day, that if anybody here were in need of grilled flesh, he had better look for a Benarese lady.

The city is divided into wards, called muhullas, each having a gate closed at night. This a curious relic of the olden times—very good for making men sober against their will. But to us moderns, it appears as making caged birds of them.

Temples in Benares are as 'plenty as blackberries.' More than a thousand of them had been destroyed by the first Moslem invader. But they multiplied again, and their number rose to some fifteen hundred by the time of Jehangeer, who describes the place in his autobiography as 'a city of temples.' These again in their turn were levelled by Aurungzebe. A third time have they raised up their heads, and now they count again not less than a thousand.

The idols are perhaps more numerous than the

swarming population of the city. They are seen not only in the public temples, but in many of the private dwellings, at the angles of the streets, and by the sides of the thoroughfares. This extraordinary number is easily accounted for by a Hindoo, who is aware of the fact, that all mortals dying in this holy city are made *immortals* by being transformed into the stone emblems of Shiva. Topographically, the Benares of the present day might afford a faithful miniature of the India of our ancestors. Its multitude of domes, turrets, and pinnacles reflect 'the very body and age—the form and pressure' of that Bharatversh which was to have been seen in the Pouranic age. It does not afford a picture of the Bharatversh either of the Vedic period, or of the age of Menu—when idolatry was unknown, and the worship of one Almighty Spirit was prevalent in India.

Bulls and beggars still abound, though not to the extent as in Heber's time. Partly the nuisance of the thing has been felt by the people themselves, and partly it has been suppressed by Government. There are enough beggars, though, to make one's charity to them 'a drop of water in the ocean.' Fakirs' houses still occur at every turn.

Benares is not purely a Shivite town. By turns, it has been Brahminical, Buddhist, Shivite, Sacto, Vishnuvite, and Jain. Shiva is certainly the god-paramount, and the lord of the soil. But Doorga, Ganesa, Surya, Vishnu, Rama, and Parisnath, have all received passports to settle in his territory. They have all of them their followers here like consuls and envoys in a foreign

court. Pilgrims of every sect throng hither to offer their prayers—and the 'fifty thousand foreign devotees give one the different types of the Hindoo race.' There are religious travellers sometimes from Thibet and Burmah. Benares has always been the head-quarters of Hindoo orthodoxy—enjoying and exercising the metropolitan authority throughout Brahmindom, that Rome once did throughout Christendom.

Bheloopoor is comparatively an open and agreeable quarter. The *muhulla* is traversed by a road wide enough to allow two wheeled carriages to pass each other with ease. To the Jains it is sacred for being the birth-place of Parisnath. They have not put up a stone to mark the spot where he was born. The Ranee-Dowager of Vizianagram has taken up her abode at Bheloopoor. She is come far away from the Coromandel to spend hither her last days, and give up her soul in holy Benares to avoid a *transmigration*. The old lady has passed her fiftieth year. By her largesses on the many festive days of the year, and her constant entertainments to the poor, she has made herself not a little prominent in the city, where men are often under the impulse of surpassing each other in splendour and charity. She lives in a mansion respectable enough in a place where hot is the competition for abode, and keeps the best *Nagara Khana* in all Benares.

In the locality where Parisnath sought to promote the spiritual welfare of men is now a dispensary to promote their physical welfare. The Baboo in charge of that dispensary turned out to be an old chum of the

doctor—and he bade us all welcome to his roof and to his table. He is here for the last five years, and quoted his own instance—his own improvement from a long-standing dyspepsia—to confirm the healthiness of the place. But he did not omit to remark, that the heat in summer beggars all description. Once, for a moment, our thoughts were turned far away to home from the scenes around us, and we sat down to communicate the news of our arrival at the holy city of Benares. This done, a long hour was spent in chatting over a cup of tea, on the newest events of the day. The *chillum* intervened, to raise the question of our being beholden most—whether to the narcotic of China, or to the exotic of America. By nine, the company rose to prepare for bath. How fortunate is a Hindoo sinner, to have to pass through the pleasantest of all purgatories in the form of a dip in the Ganges, and thereby secure a passport to heaven!

The ghauts at Benares are by far the most striking of all its architecture,—and the ghauts of a Hindoo city are always its best lounges. Upon them are passed the happiest hours of a Hindoo's day. There, in the mornings, the greater part of the population turns out to bathe, to dress, and to pray. In the evenings, the people retire thither from the toils of the day, to sit on the open steps and gulp the fresh river-air. The devout congregate to see a *Sunyasi* practise austerities, or hear a *Puramhunso* pass judgment upon Vedantism. The idler lounges there, and has a hawk's eye after a pretty wench. There do the Hindoo females see the world out of their zenanas, cultivate friendship, acquire taste, pick

up fashion, talk scandal, discuss the politics of petticoat government, learn the prices current of eatables, and propose matches for their sons and daughters. Half their flirting and half their romancing go on at the ghauts. There have the young widows opportunity to exchange glances, to know that there are admirers of their obsolete beauties, and to enjoy the highest good humour they can harmlessly indulge in.

Being the head-quarters of religion, the centre of wealth, the focus of fashion, and the seat of polite society, Benares is the great point of convergence to which is attracted the beauty of all Hindoostan. To have a peep at that beauty, the best opportunity is when the women sport themselves like merry Naiads in the waters of the Ganges. Then do you see realized the mythic story of the apple of discord between goddesses personified by the Khottanee, the Mahrattanee, and the Lucknowallee —each contending to carry off the prize. The Hindoostanee women have a prestige from the days of Sacoontola and Seeta. But it is to be questioned whether a youthful Bengalinee cannot fairly stand the rivalry of their charms. The dress and costume of the Khottanees certainly kick the beam in their favour. But we would fain raise the point on behalf of the women of Bengal, whether 'beauty unadorned is not adorned the most'— whether in the nudity of their muslin-saree, they are not as naked as 'the statue that enchants the world!'

> ——'fair undress, best dress! which checks no vein,
> But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns,
> And heightens ease with grace.'

However, with regard to the women, there is no

denying the superiority of the men, either in point of complexion or physiognomy—barring, however, those instances of obesity, which disfigures a Khottah into a monstrous caricature—a 'huge ton of a man.' The physique of the Bengalee betrays his Sudra, if not his Santhal origin. But in the Chetries and Brahmins of Kasi, we might still trace the features of an old Aryan ancestry.

From bath to breakfast. Some of the dishes were a luxury we had not known since leaving Calcutta. Most of them were in strict accordance with the culinary dicta of Menu.

Out upon sight-seeing. First of all, lay in our way the big and burly *Teelabhandessur*. He is a bluff piece of rock, the huge rotundity of which makes plausible the story of his daily growth by a grain of *teelseed*. Following, is the legend of his origin. There was a young Brahmin, who had become enamoured of the pretty wife of a wine-dealer. The husband had need to go out upon business, promising to be back on the next day. In his absence, the wife invited her paramour to spend the night in her company. But unexpectedly the dealer returned home in the middle of the night, and threw the lovers into a great embarrassment. Finding no way to send the Brahmin out, the fertile wit of a woman contrived to hide him in one of the big jars that lay in a corner of the hut. On the door being opened to him, the dealer prepared to store the wine he had brought in one of the jars. Luckily or unluckily, it is difficult to decide which, he pitched in the dark

upon the very jar in which the Brahmin was concealed. The young man little dreamt of the danger that was nigh—of being 'drowned in a butt of Malmsey.' He made no noise as the wine was poured in—and perhaps thought to himself, that it was a mighty boon to have both wine and woman together. But when the jar began to fill up towards the brim, the danger of his position could not but become obvious to him. Nothing daunted, however, he still maintained his silence rather than betray himself to disgrace, and enduring his suffocation without a groan, quietly gave up the ghost. Next morning, when the dealer went to turn out some wine, he found to his amazement both the jar and its contents petrified into stone. The story of the miracle was passed from mouth to mouth—and they made an apotheosis of the adulterer for his martyrdom in the cause of gallantry. Judging from Teelabhandessur's size, the Brahmin could scarcely have been contained in a jar of so small dimensions. All Ovid's Metamorphoses are cast into the shade by this single one of Teelabhandessur.

To test Bishop Heber's plan, we hired a boat, and scudded down the stream. *The leaning temple,* often so prominent in an engraving of Benares, threatens to give way every moment, but it has remained in that posture for several years. The foundation ground has partly slipped down, and the river annually washes away its base, still it is spared as a standing miracle.—The Mussulman has razed down the convent of Ramanund over the *Punchgunga* ghaut, and there is now a supposed impression of his feet to mark the site.—From the

burning of a corpse was made out the *Munikurnika* ghaut—the most sacred spot for cremation in all India. According to the version of the Shivites,—invented to exalt themselves at the expense of their antagonists,—Vishnu performed here certain acts of devotion in honour of Mahadeo, and as this pleased deity was in the act of nodding his assent to the prayers of his humiliated rival, he chanced to drop a pearl from one of his ear-rings—whence the name of Munikurnika. Vishnu, having been in want of water, had caused a fountain to spring up from the earth. This miracle is an object of the highest veneration. But the little cistern is so full of decomposed leaves and flowers, that a dip into it threatens to give more an immediate ague than a pass-port to heaven. Vishnu was in want of water while praying upon the very bank of the Ganges—as well may the Brahmins want us to gulp down pell-mell the story of an ant devouring up an elephant. The impressions of his feet are shown on the spot. But all such foot-prints are a religious plagiarism from the Buddhists, by whom they were first introduced on the death of Buddha. The closing scene of Arichandra is laid at the Muni-kurnika ghaut. Indeed, Benares has been the state-cage for state-prisoners from remote days. But none of the ex-kings under English surveillance has had to eke out his last days in a hut on the grounds of a burning-ghaut,—and to depend for his meals on 'the rice with which the corpses' mouths are filled.' The cost of the obsequies is now something more than 'some rice, a cubit's length of cloth, and a copper coin.'

The neighbourhood of Munikurnika long continued a dense jungle. Trees, built into the walls of houses, are still pointed out as 'veterans of that forest.' Hard by, is the temple of Bhoyrubnath—the great generalissimo of Shiva. Next is the spot of Toolsidoss' residence—the Milton of Hindi, the author of the popular version of the Ramayana, who flourished here about the year 1574. The locality is classic also for the abode of many of Choitunya's followers, who were some of them very learned men—and have left behind the latest works in Sanscrit. The travels of Choitunya throw a light on the state of Benares in the fourteenth century.

Off from a boat, the large and lofty river-side shrines and mansions, rising in tier above tier, make up a gay and grand frontispiece. Their walls are richly adorned with foliage and figures of gods and giants carved in stone. They are principally the works of the piety of Mahratta princes and princesses. One is of Bajee Row, another of Holkar, and a third of Ahulya Baie. To the Mahrattas is the present city chiefly indebted for its foundation. It is from the time of their supremacy that its present flourishing state takes its date.

Landed to see the observatory. To speak for once in the spirit of a *bonâ-fide* Hindoo, the act of getting up to the city from the river is like climbing up to a mount —Benares being fancied as the adopted *Cailasa* of Shiva. The Hindoo Temple of Science stands on a spot almost washed by the Ganges. It is ascended by a long flight of steps, many of which have gone out of order—so that a young tyro can practically experience here the diffi-

for the sake of preserving appearance. Annually from Benares is still issued a calendar which ranks highest among everything of its kind in the Hindoo world. The Man Mundil is the oldest building in Benares.

From the observatory to *Madoo-rai-ke-dharara*—where one witnesses the triumph of the iconoclastic Mussulman over the idolatrous Hindoo. Originally, a Hindoo temple, dedicated to *Vishnu* under the name of Bindoo Madoo, stood here. It then covered, as seen by Tavernier, an extensive plot of ground. By Aurungzebe's fiat, this Hindoo temple was demolished, and converted into a Mahomedan mosque. The mosque has scarcely any imposing dimensions or striking architectural beauty,—only it makes itself prominent from a spot the most elevated in all Benares. The two minars, shooting towards the sky, are seen from many miles off. From their top, the Muezzin's call is heard above the din and strife of the city below. This Mahomedan mosque is like a blot upon the snow-white purity of Hindooism. It cannot fail to be regarded by the Hindoos as a grim ogre, which obtrudes its mitred head high above everything else, and looks down with scorn—gloating in a triumphant exultation. To drop the metaphor, the altitude of the minars is 225 feet from the bed of the river. The view from their height is exceedingly picturesque. All Benares seems to spread tapestried out beneath the feet—in which the diminished temples scarcely pop up their heads, and the busy crowds appear to swarm like bees in a hive. On a clear morning the Himalayas are visible from the minars.

The desecration of their temple must have sorely panged the feelings of the Hindoos of that day. How the sacrilege has been revenged with a tenfold vengeance by the overthrow of the Mogul empire! In the last days of his life Aurungzebe must have been haunted, a Hindoo poet would have imagined, with visitations of the god Vishnu, and filled with forebodings of the rising storm of the Mahratta power, the 'sea of troubles' in which the vessel of state was to be tossed, its inevitable wreck and annihilation, and the ultimate end of his posterity in exile on a foreign shore.*

Distant view of Ramnugger from the *dharara*. The castellated palace of the Rajah rose nobly on the margin of the Ganges. The wicket-gate, through which Cheyte Sing had dropped himself down the steepy bank to the river by means of a string formed of his turban, was scarcely visible. Many of that Rajah's works are still extant,—a temple sculptured with images of the Hindoo gods, a magnificent stone tank, and a beautiful stone pavilion. Cheyte Sing had at last to serve in the ranks of Scindia's army. In compensation for the loss of temporal royalties and realities, he—or rather his manes—may well be consoled by the immortality which Burke has conferred upon his name.

Our next visit was paid to *bom-bom* Biseswara. The same that St Peter's is in Christendom, is the temple of Biseswara in Hindoodom. But the one is the admiration

* 'Wherever I look, I see nothing but the Divinity.' 'I have committed numerous crimes, and I know not with what punishments I may be seized.' 'Come what may, I have launched my vessel on the waves.'—*Last letters of Aurungzebe to Azim and Cambaksh.*

of the world, while the other disappoints all expectations. There is nothing great or grand in the Hindoo Sanctum Sanctorum, commensurate with its celebrity. True, the 'golden dome' of the Tamul poet is not a mere fancy, but may be seen in fact, 'with the banner of the goddess of charity streaming over it.' But it towers not, as of yore, above 'all the pinnacles of the city.' The 'jewelled goper,' or the lofty building over the gateway, has ceased to exist. Coming with exaggerated notions, the pilgrim is sadly disappointed to find everything on a diminutive scale. The sanctuary, which all tongues raise to the skies, scarcely dares to rear up its head—being afraid, as it were, of confronting the Islamite ogre in its neighbourhood. Nor does his godship—the mighty Biseswara himself—less belie the great prestige of his name. He is liliputian beyond all expectation,—and is quite in the opposite extreme of a grand image of Shiva, some forty or fifty feet high, like Phidias' Jupiter, to rank deservedly as the first of divinities, lending an imposing appearance to idolatry, and calling forth the remark of Quintillian, that 'the majesty of art is combined with the majesty of God.' The burly Teelabhandessur would tell more in his place of the sovereign deity of Benares. To all appearance, Biseswara looks like an old decrepit divinity, who has outlived by many centuries his contemporaries Somnauth of Diu and Jugsoom of Nagarcote—and who has been dwarfed by age into the most pitiable littleness.

Though wanting in colossal dimensions, Biseswara's temple is, in fact, the most glorious of all temples upon

the earth. This is done by the thick plates of pure gold with which its dome is covered—a bequest of the monarch, to whom our rulers deigned the courtesy of styling as 'the Lion of the Punjaub.' Mill, the historian, scouts the idea of the wealth of Hindoo temples. Here is something tough and tangible to shake his obstinacy, and scatter his belaboured logic to the winds.

For want of sufficient antiquity, the priests dare not ascribe the present temple to Viscarma—their celestial architect. It is still in the remembrance of the octogenarian to have been built by the Mahratta princess Ahulya Baie, and adorned by the Sikh potentate Runjeet. The mixed Saracenic and Hindoo style betrays it to be the architecture of a recent age.

In Biseswara's temple may partially be realized an idea of the ancient pagoda of Somnath. The one is now not less famous and frequented than had been the other in the most palmy days of Hindoo idolatry. There is a perpetual crowd of devotees and pilgrims with offerings at the shrine. On an eclipse day the flock of votaries exceeds the number of a hundred thousand. The deity is washed every morning and evening in water from the Ganges, excepting that it has not to be brought from a distance of 1000 miles. There is a great bell from Nepaul which is struck by worshippers during prayer. But, instead of hanging by a chain of gold weighing 200 maunds, it does so by a chain of much less precious metal, and of considerably less weight. In the centre hangs down a lamp, but not from a golden chain. The temple is endowed, but not

with the revenue of 2000 villages. The establishment also does not consist of 2000 priests, 300 musicians, and 500 dancing-girls. Nor would Neill have been rewarded with a profusion of diamonds if, like Mahmood, he had struck the god with a mace in the late mutiny. Hindoo princesses do not choose now to consecrate their lives to the service of the god. There is, however, too much pomp to make idolatry attractive. The scene at vespers is one of great solemnity. The altar is then brilliantly illuminated; the emblem is richly adorned with garlands of flowers; aromatics are burned to diffuse the fragrance of incense; various instruments are played upon, striking up an agreeable concert; hymns chanted from the Vedas rise in sonorous accent; the chorus is swelled by the worshippers, and time is kept by the beat of their palms. Dancing and songs then follow in routine. The god is next served with his supper. Then he has his *bhang*, his *betel*, and his *chillum*, to go to bed, wrapped up in a shawl in winter, or a brocade in summer.

Shiva, with his matted locks, besmeared body, and half-closed eyes, well personifies the man who drinks a glass too much. The toper-god may be thought to represent the Indian Bacchus. His *phallic* emblem is undoubtedly from the Romans, whose ladies used to wear it round their necks as a charm against sterility. The Brahmins, fully appreciating the advantage of idolatry over the idealism of the first Buddhists, must have introduced it from abroad. Shivaism may have had a purer origin in the beginning, as some choose to think. But it has

certainly gone the whole hog to come to the bosoms of men. The sect of the Shivites appears to be the oldest of all others—dating its origin probably from the commencement of the Christian era, previous to which Buddhism must have been predominant, when Asoca had so zealously laboured for its diffusion. The example of the Shivites must have emboldened the Sactes to introduce the worship of the female generative principle—the earliest mention of which is to be found in the Periplus, which alludes to the temple of Comori at Cape Comorin in the second century. Before long mutual affinity must have coalesced the two sects to merge their interests in one common superstition.

The *Gyan-Bapi* is a sacred well—'the holy of holies.' In the depths of this well had the old and original Bisoswara of the ante-Mahomedan period to be concealed on the fall of Benares—and therefrom is its great sanctity. The Hindoo deity, like Minerva on the approach of Alaric to Athens, ought to have stood in a menacing attitude. His Nandi and Vringi ought to have been up and doing. But the fate that overtakes the drunk and incapable man no less overtakes the drunk and incapable god, as also his followers. The spot occupied by Bisoswara, immediately under the cupola, is pretended by the Brahmins to be a throne, which Shiva has filled uninterruptedly for a hundred million of years. But they ignore the interregnum that occurred on the disappearance of the old god. The present emblem has risen phœnix-like from the ashes of his predecessor. Surmounting the well is a small tower; there is a narrow

steep flight of steps to go down to the bottom. The subterraneous communication with the Ganges is an *Aye-and-my-Betty* story. Hereabouts is seen the couchant figure of a bull—the image of Nandi, the *bahun* or bearer of Mahadeo. The figure is as large as life, and would not have been a bad specimen of Hindoo sculpture, with a little more knowledge of anatomy—especially about the neck.

The high-priest of Biseswara is singled out by his tall, portly figure, and dignity of demeanour. He has the sleek head and fat paunches of the happy, good-humoured mortal who has to think little, and not the care of toiling for his bread. His fair complexion and noble physiognomy are proofs of his high-born Aryan lineage. He was very civil to us, and offered a garland to each to wear round our necks, and 'look like sacrifices,'—to borrow Bishop Heber's expression.

The neighbourhood of Biseswara is the nucleus of the oldest city, and the closest inhabited. Here are crowded the houses of the most ancient families. The streets here are the narrowest in all the town. Formerly there was no drainage, and the way through them was a perfect quagmire. Heaps of vegetable matter rotted in them. Offal was shot and pots emptied from the windows opening above. They are now paved with stones. But the passage is often blocked up by one of those sacred bulls,—'those fakirs of the animal world,' that lazily saunter along, or lie across them. They frighten the women in no small degree. To make them move their unwieldy bulk out of the way,

they must be gently patted—or 'woe be to the profane wretch who braves the prejudices of the fanatic population.' To strike them is a high crime, social and religious. Certainly, bullhood and priesthood appear to be the most thriving trades in Benares. The sacred creatures put the shops under a contribution. It is lucky that they do not choose to help themselves, but poke up their noses into a fruiterer's or confectioner's shop, and wait till the owner is pleased to give them some fruit or sweetmeats. Overfeeding has made them as unwieldy as little prone to mischief. The beggars abounding here are more pick-pockets than they profess to be. They do not look starved or lean, but fine stout men. Their business is not only to fill their stomachs, but also their purses. They solicit your charity with one hand, while they try to pick your pocket with the other. Time was when a pilgrim could not have shown himself here without being surrounded by a troop of applicants, as ravenous as vultures about a carcass, all anxious to have their share of the carrion. The robust appearance of the beggars is a proof of the unceasing resort of pilgrims, whose charity fills their cup to overflowing.

Twenty or thirty paces from Biseswara is his seraglio, or, more properly, the temple of *Unna Poorna*, identified by Heber with the *Anna Perenna* of the Romans. This is by far a more imposing building than that of Biseswara. The choir is spacious and grand. The columns supporting the choir are well proportioned. The profile of the cornices displays rich decorations.

To heighten the devotional feelings by a sombre light, the image is placed in a dark recess. In the fashion of a modern Hindoo lady, the goddess is *purda-nashin*, or veiled from the public gaze. On the curtain being withdrawn, we stood admitted to the sight of a little female statue, with four arms. The figure was wrapped from the neck to the foot in clothing. Only the face was uncovered, and beamed refulgently in the glare of the lamps constantly burning in her presence. The image is of marble, but it has two models of its face—one cast in gold, and the other in silver, which are put on to disguise the goddess under a variety of appearance. She has in her hands the utensils used in a native kitchen, to indicate her as presiding over the distribution of perennial food. The temple of the Indian Cybele has been designed much in the fashion of a native zenana, and is appropriately placed on the left of that of her lord—the relative position of woman to man. It is remarkable, that Shiva is quite European in eschewing bigamy, and sticking himself to one wife—while Krishna, like a true Eastern potentate, keeps a large harem, filled with women of every rank and beauty.

The golden face of *Unna Poorna* recalls to mind Fitch's description of the Benares idols in his day:—'Many of them are black and have claws of brass with long nails, and some ride upon peacocks and other fowls which be evil-favoured, with long hawk's bills, some with one thing and some with another, but none with a good grace. They be black and evil-favoured,

their mouths monstrous, their ears gilded and full of jewels, their teeth and eyes of gold, silver, and glass.' More than one idol under allusion can be identified in our day. Three long centuries have caused no change in the items of Hindoo idolatry, while in that very period the English have risen to be the first nation in the world, and to become the arbiter of the fate of India.

In *Unna Poorna's* temple, Bishop Heber saw a Brahmin pass his whole day seated on a little pulpit, reading or lecturing on the Vedas. Near us also was seen a similar Brahmin, who from morning till sunset daily reads the Vedas, seated in a corner of the choir. He seldom raises his eyes from his book. The sonorous Sanscrit attracts round him a crowd of pilgrims, who do not turn their backs without throwing a pittance into his copper basin. It is doubtful whether he reads the Vedas which do not inculcate idolatry. His shaven head and face are anti-Vedic, and betray the adoption of Buddhistic habits. To the Buddhists should be traced the origin of all shaven heads, of going barefoot, of monkish costume, of monastic life, and of the celibacy of the priesthood. The Vedic Rishis wore the long hair and beard. The mother of Pandoo is known to have swooned away in the arms of Vyas for his long beard. To this day, Nareda is represented under a long grizzled beard in our native Jatras. In many points the Brahmin has compromised with the Buddhist, of which he is not aware in the present day. The antiquity of the Vedas has made them

as unintelligible as the Sibylline leaves. The study of them now is an amateur task, and the instances are few in which a Brahmin is disposed to explore through their obsolete Sanscrit. It may be that we are impeaching the man upon imaginary grounds. He may really be a Veda-knowing scholar. But in that case, he cannot have a very sincere veneration for the goddess in whose temple he makes his livelihood.

More than one Sunnyassee exhibits himself here in his hideous attire. Between the unpretending Brahmin scholar and the ostentatious Sunnyassee there is a marked difference. The latter is all exterior, with his matted locks, his skeleton body, his tiger-skin garment, his trident and tongs, and his rosary of beads. The Sunnyassee pretends to personate Shiva. The Bhoyrubbee pretends to personate Sacti. The latter takes a vow of celibacy, and is a Roman Vestal or Catholic Nun under another disguise. Very often she is animated by a sincere and enthusiastic spirit of devotion. But the frailty of the sex many times predominates over the fidelity of the votary. The young and pretty Bhoyrubbee is not thought to be very steadfast to her professions. Happily, both Sunnyassees and Bhoyrubbees are fast going out of vogue. It is now rare to see a woman who has renounced all pleasures, all property, all society, and all domestic affection, pass on from city to city with a vermilion spot on her forehead, a cloth of dull orange on her body, a long trident in one hand, and a hollow gourd in the other. Hindoo female ambition is not exercised now to distinguish itself by

Suttceism or a life of abstinence and prayer, but by the qualities which fit a woman to be the companion of man. The Yogee also has become an obsolete character. The public of the present day would not tolerate his idle life. No man now performs the ceremony of standing on one leg between five fires, and gazing steadfastly at the sun the whole day. Many of our readers may remember to have seen, but cannot see now, a man holding up his hand above his head till the arm has lost its power, and the nails have pierced through the closed fist. Calidas's 'pious Yogee, motionless as a pollard, his body covered with a white ant's edifice made of raised clay, his neck encircled by a number of knotty plants, and his shoulders concealed by birds' nests,' is now a myth. Fifty years ago, there was to have been seen at Benares a Sunnyassee who had accustomed himself to repose on a bed of iron spikes for 35 years.* His penance would not have procured him any consequence in our day. The police has its eyes now upon all such idlers.

Sight-seeing in Benares soon tires by being wanting in variety. It is found to be a repetition of the same thing over again—and resembles the entertainment given to Pompey, in which were a variety of dishes, but all made out of one hog—nothing but pork differently disguised. Here also the variety is made out of one religion—nothing but idolatry, under different disguises. Travellers are attracted to Benares as a place the most ancient, venerable, and historic—as a sanctuary the holiest in the Hindoo world—and as a town the richest

and most influential in Hindoostan. But it has attractions peculiar only to itself, which scarcely gratify the curiosity of a rational mind. No remains of ancient Hindoo architectural genius are to be found in Benares. The Rajah of the land has no gallery like the Vatican, thrown open to delight all connoisseurs with the sculptures of a Hindoo Phidias, and the paintings of a Hindoo Raphael. There is no museum, in which are assembled the rare curiosities of Hindoo art and science. To interest the scholar who is drawn hither by the fame of its learning there are no classic seminaries—no public libraries containing the treasures of Hindoo thought and literature. There is no such scene as a Hindoo Westminster Abbey, in which repose the most remarkable men of Hindoo history. Nothing resembling a native public theatre or circus is known to the Hindoos. Our native public entertainments are all tainted with idolatry. The civilization of the ancient Hindoos was characteristic of their age. They did not cultivate any politics or public oratory, and there arose no Hindoo Cicero to harangue from a Hindoo Forum. The ancient Brahmins confined their learning in far-off hermitages, and thought its circulation among the masses impolitic. Their sculpture was exercised only upon a fanciful idolatry, and painting was ranked by them as scarcely superior to caligraphy. They took no pleasure in collecting anything curious in nature or art under a public roof. They did not know to honour the memory of their illustrious dead except by an apotheosis. Religion was 'the be-all and the-end-all' of their existence. It

gave its stamp to their public opinion and social institutions, to their individual ambition and feelings, to their arts and learning, to their festivals and amusements. The only works which religion taught them to appreciate were a temple, a ghaut, or an alms-house. The highest intellectual pleasures to which religion directed their taste were a public rehearsal of the Ramayana or Mahabarat under an awning in the bazar. And the most popular character in which a man was ambitious to figure himself under their *régime*, was that of the founder of a sect. Hence travelling in India has little charms beyond the grandeur and romance of its natural sceneries. But under the auspices of the English, the topography and character of Indian towns are undergoing a change, which, adding to their pre-existing renown, shall attract travellers from the farthest ends of the world.

One place, forming an exception to our remark, is the *Chouk*. 'From those delicate silks,' says Macaulay, 'which went forth from the looms of this city to adorn the balls at St James' and Versailles,' to the best cotton and woollen fabrics of Bengal and Cashmere, the finest diamonds of Golconda, and the pearls of Ceylon, the polished armoury of Oude, the excellent perfumery of Ghazipoor,—all that Hindoo artistic genius has devised and refined, and which gave to the Indian corner of the Crystal Palace the most brilliant attractions,—everything is displayed here in a gorgeous variety. The utilitarian is here pleased to be in his congenial element, —and the foreigner to fancy himself in the midst of a

great Hindoo National Exhibition. Nothing strikes so markedly as the contrast between the gross superstitious mummeries of a low barbarism on the one hand, and the ingenious wares and manufactures of a high refinement on the other. But native shop-keeping is yet sadly deficient in taste. Behind a gay and gaudy exterior the shops hide the disorder of a chaos.

The really worthiest object of all to see in Benares is its College, which is emphatically an architectural curiosity—'a gem in building.' Major Kittoe could scarcely have given expression to his feelings in a more becoming way than by designing and executing this beautiful edifice, to stand as a noble and abiding monument in honour of the Indian Seraswattee in her most devoted and classic city. It is the right thing in its right place—a suitable memorial to perpetuate the labours of the antiquary in the field of Indian Archæology. The building is immaculate amidst structures of bad taste and skill. The glass is all stained. The fountains impart a grandeur and state to the institution. The library is stored with rare Oriental manuscripts. The museum is entertaining for its curiosities. There are seen the relics of Hindoo pottery in the tenth and eleventh centuries. By lying buried in the earth, the specimens appear to have suffered little injury. In the compound to the north has been put up the pillar, which, standing for many ages upon the river-side near Aurungzebe's mosque, had at last been laid prostrate by a freak of Mahomedan bigotry. Long had tradition regarded this pillar as Shiva's shaft—that it was grad-

ually sinking in the ground, and that when its top became level with the earth, all mankind was to be of one caste and religion. It is a pity the tradition should not have been true to inaugurate the epoch of the most desirable of all states of things. But the mystery about the pillar has been cleared up, and it stands now in all the integrity of its being one of Asoca's edict-columns. It is a beautiful shaft of one stone, with many carvings and inscriptions. From the original position of this column on the river-side, Benares, in the age of Asoca, must be supposed to have extended along the river as at the present day, unless it had been put up there on a subsequent occasion.

Benares may be styled the capital of the India of the Hindoo. It has always been a city next in size and importance to the seat of the sovereign. Hither, at all times, have streams of men flowed and concentrated from various points; and its population has always been next to that of the capital of the empire. It has in all ages exercised the highest intellectual and ecclesiastical influence on the land. Here have been formed the minds of the most eminent Hindoo philosophers. From Benares have emanated and still emanate almost all new opinions on questions of Hindoo theology, Hindoo philosophy, and Hindoo jurisprudence. The verdict of the Benares authorities is final in the Hindoo world. To them is made the appeal for all differences of opinion between the schools of Mithila, of Gour, and of Dravira. Here Buddha first preached his reform. Here Sancara Achargya won the great Shivite controversial victory.

Here, disguised as a Hindoo boy, Feizi became initiated in the Hindoo Shasters. Here at the fountain-head did Aurungzebe try to diffuse the leaven of Mahomedanism. And here at last has the Benares College been erected, to enlighten and form the native population into a new Hindoo nation, with new ideas in their heads, and new institutions distinguishing their national character.

Though not half a century has yet elapsed, it now appears as almost ante-diluvian, since the Prinseps and Tytlers on the one hand, and the Macaulays and the Trevelyans on the other, fought the great battle of Native Education in India. The result has far exceeded the anticipation, and the Anglicists have hooted the Orientalists from the field. Just as a lubberly native *bhur* is beside a steamer—just as an up-country *ekah* is in juxtaposition with a Railway locomotive—so is the Sanscrit *Bidyala* of this city by the side of the Benares College. The Pundits of our day seem to do no more than perform the vestal duty of preserving the flame of Sanscrit learning from extinction. If India needs regeneration, it cannot be hoped to be effected by means of Sanscrit tuition. Rich as the Sanscrit language is, the vocabulary of the Brahmins has no word for *patriotism*. The range of Sanscrit poetical literature extends from the simplest fable to the loftiest epic. But in the whole compass of that literature, there is not one spirit-stirring war-song, like Burns' 'Bannockburn,' or Campbell's 'Battle of the Baltic.' The Hindoos may have produced the first law-giver in the world; but in their political jurisprudence there is not the slightest

exposition of the principles on which are based the Magna Charta, the Petition of Right, and the Habeas Corpus Act. The Upanishads and Dursanas have, indeed, received the favourable verdict of the most competent judges; but nowhere in their philosophy do the Brahmins inculcate the sentiment 'better death than slavery.' In their history is found not one instance of political martyrdom, like Cato or Sidney. Of what good then will the Sanscrit be to help India in her social reform, in her political aspirations, in her efforts to keep pace with the nations of Europe. The Sanscrit may improve the head, but will not elevate the mind or purify the heart. The effects of Sanscrit are best visible in a modern Pundit of Nuddea, who is good only for wrangling and quoting ancient texts, but not for originating a new institution, or for embarking in a new project for national progress. The Sanscrit has ceased to be a qualification, rather it is looked upon as a disqualification. The Sanscrit is good only for adornment, but is not of any use in the actual business of life. As sentimentalists we may advocate for the language in which Valmiki spoke and Calidas has sung. As utilitarians we would have the language that should teach us the truths to abridge distance and economize time. To quote Longinus' famous remark, the Sanscrit, like the Odyssey, resembles the setting sun; the English, like the Iliad, resembles the rising sun. The Sanscrit is the gray-headed matron to be respected for her age; the English is the fresh maid of fourteen to be loved for her youthful charms. The decision of the

question between Sanscrit and English is easy. The first is romance, the last is bread—and the common saying is that 'romance is good, but bread is better.'

The Hindoo mind is wedged in prejudices, and the Sanscrit 'cannot minister to a mind diseased.' The Hindoo patient wants food, and not poison. The benighted native wants to have the film removed from his eyes; but the Sanscrit surrounds him 'with a cloud instead, and ever-during dark.' He wants to *advance* —which is the watchword of Europe; but the Sanscrit would keep him far in the rear of nations, and hold his mind in bondage to antiquated notions. The Sanscrit held good some two or three thousand years ago; it is *effete* in the present day. The Sanscrit belongs to the age of the bow and arrow—and of travelling in caravans. The English belongs to the age of Armstrongs, Railways, and Electric Telegraphs. To cultivate the Sanscrit would be to doom ourselves to seek a grain of truth from a bushel of chaff—to perpetuate the reign of error, and to ignore those high achievements of the human intellect which have changed the face of the world, and ameliorated the condition of mankind. Surely, we do not want to uphold the geography of the Golden Meru and Seas of Butter; but to know the use of the mariner's compass and steer upon the ocean. We do not want to revive the days of Sudra ignorance; but to learn the art of casting types to diffuse knowledge through every corner of the land. We do not want to return to the days of Sutteeism; but to introduce the re-marriage of our widows. We do not want

dreamy religious speculations; but practical energy and matter-of-fact knowledge. We want to be men of the nineteenth century, and to be admitted into the comity of civilized nations. Unquestionably, it is through the agency of the English that this object can ever be hoped to be accomplished. But a question may arise as to what should be the medium for educating the tiller of the soil, weaver, manufacturer, mechanic, artisan,—all those, in short, who are best known under the designation of people. Here we must deplore the curse of Babel, and ponder upon the difficulty of changing the colloquial *patois* of the common people, and the slow progress of innovations in language. It must be a long time before the study of English can become congenial to the tastes and available to the means of those who hold the plough, tend the oxen, and toil at the looms. Until it can be popularized, the Vernacular must be the medium of their tuition. But here, again, a staff of good scholars in English should devote their labours to improve the quality of instruction that is to be imparted; or otherwise the inert masses of our common people would not be roused to a proper sense of their rights and interests, and would not be enabled to maintain a successful competition with the growing intelligence of a progressive world. Not altogether to abandon the Sanscrit, which has been pronounced to be 'more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either,' let the study of that precious language be left to amateurs and philologists, who only

can do justice to its merits. But for substantial and immediate benefit to society, the study of English literature and science should predominate in our schools and colleges—as is the power of that nation dominant in the land.

To sum up the picture of Benares. Topographically, or materially, the conditions of things may not have altered much. But morally, the influence of a better civilization has operated to introduce signal changes in that condition. The present city is not so strictly divided, as a Hindoo town used to be in the Hindoo ages, into separate quarters for each caste, when an unlawful intrusion into another's locality was a *casus belli* amongst the inhabitants. The Brahmin and the Sudra, the native and the alien, now live together intermingled in one and the same quarter. The great Mahomedan mosque rises in the very heart of the Hindoo city. The Jain temple is situated between two shrines of Mahadeo. There is probably no place in the world which contains such a motley population as the town of Benares. In all ages this population has been split into innumerable sects. Under the Hindoos, no two sects had ever lived on friendly terms with each other. There was no sympathy between the Brahmaite and the Gunaputya—between the Suryaite and the Ramat. The epicurean Shivite often assailed the platonic Vishnuvite. In his turn, the rake gave no quarters to the wassailer. The war of sect against sect was fiercer than the war of race against race. The struggle lasted for generations, till the Mahomedan came in and made

the *mêlée* grow worse. But each man now enjoys the benefit of toleration in the exercise of his religion, and lives in harmony with his neighbour. The Shivite has now no power to drive out the Vishnuvite—the Brahmin to oust a Jain. Amidst the desperate and disorderly rabble of ancient Benares, crime must have been fearfully prevalent. Each man must have emancipated himself from the restraints of law. The peace of the city must have been repeatedly disturbed. To this disorganized state must principally be ascribed the rise of those notorious desperadoes—the *Goondas* and *Bankas*, who had in a preceding age made themselves the terror of Benares. They were the means that families employed to pay off their mutual scores. They settled the accounts of all private brawls and long-standing feuds between individuals. The Goondas finished off men without any detection of their crime, and were objects of a mysterious dread to the wealthy and timid. In their days, the young Lothario who stole the heart of a family woman often disappeared all of a sudden, and was heard of no more. But not one of those half-bully and half-dandy bravoes are now seen to strut and swagger about the streets. The machinery for keeping the peace now works with an unprecedented efficiency. The *Kotwallee* is situated in the thick of the town. Order is preserved such as had never been known in Benares. The knave and the libertine have seen the end of their domineering. No man's life nor any woman's honour are now exposed to risk. No boy or girl can now be set in the bazar *with a piece of straw on*

their heads for sale in bondage.* No creditor now dares to apply the *spine-bender* and the *kiddy*† to his debtor. For resisting as exorbitant the demands of Government, no *koor* or circular pile of wood can now be raised to burn upon it an old woman, such as Lord Teignmouth saw at Benares, in 1788. Foreigners cried shame upon the seminaries of Hindoo learning, and schools and colleges have arisen to displace the primitive *toles* that were no better than the long cow-sheds of an indigo factory. The Sudra now reads the Vedas, but no magistrate 'drops hot oil into his mouth and ears.' No Mussulman now needs to feign himself a Hindoo to learn the Shasters. The progress of change is nowhere so clearly visible as in the tone which the Hindoo mind has imbibed from the pressure of surrounding opinions—from the spirit of the age. Heretofore, men acquiring wealth elsewhere retired hither to expend it in a round of idolatrous ceremonies. But far other objects now engage the attention of the Benarese, than emulating each other in the erection of a ghaut or temple. Religion has ceased to be the staple of their talk. No man is now ambitious of filling a space in the public eye by acts and institutions of idolatry. For forty centuries had the eye of the Hindoo been upturned only heavenward. He has now bent down his head to look to the concerns of the earth he inhabits. The cares of the present have superseded his anxieties about futurity.

* 'Arichundra,' Act v., Scene i.

† The *spine-bender* was an instrument of torture, which, when applied to a man, made him contract his body by bending forwards. The *kiddy* was another which pressed down the fingers.

The promotion of physical comforts, by means of hospitals, dispensaries, and sanatory improvements, forms now dearer objects than schemes for the spiritual welfare of his species. From its climax has Hindoo-idolatry begun to wane. To quote the common slang of the day, it has seen 'the beginning of its end.'

In *Secrole*, no man fails to remember Vizier Ali's massacre of Mr Cherry, and the single-handed defence of Mr Davis—a civilian-judge—with a hog-spear against a host of assailants. The memory of Vizier Ali was long cherished by the prostitutes and dancing-women of Benares, among whom the greater portion of his pension was squandered. No European who passed that city for twenty years after that Nabob's arrest and confinement in Fort William but heard from the windows songs in his praise and in praise of the massacre.

The spot where orphan boys and girls of the Church Mission School now receive their tuition was once a scene of Thug murders and robberies. Long did wayfarers pass it with a shudder after sunset. In the compound of that Church is pointed out a deep well, into which the bodies of the victims used to be thrown.

In 1781 Warren Hastings publicly rode through the streets of Benares behind the *howdah* of the Shazada, carrying a fan of peacock's feathers in his hand. In 1860, every native in Benares has to salaam to a passing European. The Englishman is no more the *dewan* of the house of Timoor, but the Suzerain of India. Last year a rich Baboo from Calcutta narrowly escaped horse-whipping for failing to stop his gharry and salute an

officer driving along the same road. It was audacious in the Mogul times to raise an umbrella in the presence of the Sovereign. It is audacious in the present times to drive in a carriage and pair and omit to bow to an Englishman—who is an infinitesimal representative of the sovereign.*

Our lawyer gave us a most startling instance of the *procedure* which Mofussil functionaries sometimes choose to adopt. Two years ago a native attorney of the Supreme Court had come to conduct a case at Benares. He had been accompanied by an European gentleman of the bar. One morning, the attorney was surprised to find the Darogah of the city come and place him under arrest. The astounded attorney could think of no earthly offence that he had committed, for which he could be come upon as a culprit. The Darogah also could not assign any reason for his proceedings. He was asked to produce his warrant, but could show none. He had merely received the *hookum* of his superior—and a *hookum* is law in the Mofussil. 'If such is the state of things you live under, Darogah Sahib,' said the attorney, 'then I am most willing to obey that law.' Dropping a line or two to his friend, the barrister, he at once proceeded with the Darogah. It was not yet cutcherry-time, and they had to go on to the house of the official. He was engaged after breakfast in a game of chess. The

* 'There would be as much indignation experienced at any attempt on the part of natives to use the staging bungalows, as there is now expressed by some Europeans at Calcutta at their audacity in intruding upon "ladies and gentlemen in first-class carriages." '—*My Diary in India.*

attorney was made to wait for two hours in an outer verandah. His friend, the barrister, arrived, when the official made haste to come out, and take the depositions of the attorney, respecting the whereabouts of his client, and the nature of his case. He was then told to go away, without one word of courteous explanation or apology for his having been brought up as a felon.

In the English burial-ground at Seerole, the most interesting monument is that of Colonel Wilford. The Hindoo nation has reason to venerate the memory of that indefatigable Sanscrit scholar, who had almost Hindooized himself by a residence in Benares from 1788 to 1822, and who at length mingled his dust in the soil of that great seat of Brahminical learning. There was a period when many Englishmen loved India not for the sake of its cotton, indigo, or saltpetre, but as the mother-country of Sanscrit,—when there existed an intense curiosity concerning the literature, the religion, and the antiquities of the subjects of their eastern dominion,—and when they were willing enough to repay the debt which the world owed to the genius and wisdom of the Hindoos. The imperial Romans behaved not towards the Greeks as conquerors to the conquered, but as pupils to their masters. 'I know nothing more glorious to the Greeks,' says Chateaubriand, 'than these words of Cicero—"Recollect, Quintus, that you govern the Greeks, who civilized all nations by teaching them mildness and humanity, and to whom Rome is indebted for all the knowledge she possesses." When we consider what Rome was at the time of Pompey and Cæsar, what Cicero himself was,

we shall find in these words a magnificent panegyric.' It is the master of the world complimenting the master of the arts and sciences. Now, the Athens which civilized Europe had, in her turn, been civilized by Benares. The city of Seraswattee has the precedence of the city of Minerva. The Hindoos are acknowledged as the first to have started in the race of civilization. In the same manner that Cicero and Atticus went to Athens to study eloquence at its source, did Lycurgus and Pythagoras travel to India to learn law and philosophy at their sources. 'When we strive to pierce the mysterious gloom that shrouds an infant world, it is the heaven-aspiring peaks of Central Asia that we first discern, illumined by those primeval myths which, like the dazzling coruscations of a polar winter, play fantastically amidst the night of ages, ere history's dawn has yet streaked time's hoary horizon with its earliest ray; and when at length the opening morn dispels these visionary splendours, we behold the luxuriant plains of the Ganges already occupied by an intelligent people with its philosophers and sages attempting, by rendering matter the shadowy phenomena of mind, to idealize the metempsychosis of nature into an eternal, self-emanating, and self-absorbing unity. It is to these Hindoo sages that we are indebted for most of the philosophical and theological ideas, that we will keep striving to weave into a system that shall finally explain what we ought, ere this, to be aware will, for beings endowed with our limited faculties, for ever remain inexplicable. It would, in fact, be easy to show, were it not foreign to our pur-

pose, how the metaphysical speculations of these sages, after being recast in a classic mould by Plato, were ingrafted by the first Fathers of the Church on the primitive doctrines of Christianity, through which they still exercise a powerful influence over the most civilized nations of the globe.'* The civilization of the ancient Hindoos is that of the forerunner; the civilization of the modern Europeans is that of the outrunner. On the issues of the question in dispute between Sir William Jones and Mr Mill, depend the most important political results. The one laboured to eradicate from the minds of the governors the false and pernicious notion that the governed were an illiterate and barbarous people,—and to inspire each with a mutual appreciation of the other, to cement themselves into a loyal nation round a parental throne. The other laboured to lower the ruled in the eyes of the rulers, and to inflame the minds of each with a mutual hatred of the other, till things tend to a crisis, called by the terrible name of rebellion. It was generous in Sir William Jones to visit Benares, and regret his departure from that city, like Julian quitting the Academy. It was cruel in Mill to labour only to prove the Hindoos a nation of idolaters, forgers, and perjurers. The behaviour of the great Cæsar towards the Athenians should teach the Anglo-Saxon to 'forgive the living for the sake of the dead.'

The unanimous concert with which, forty years ago, the inhabitants of Benares sat in *dhurna* against the imposition of a house-tax, is now in marked contrast with

* Blackwell.

their meek submission to the imposition of the Income-tax. The Disarming Act has not raised the whisper of a complaint. It is remarkable, that a city like Benares, which abounds with so many *budmashes*, and which has often been the scene of tumult and trouble, under the least pretext, passed off rather quietly in the recent mutiny. There had not been felt the same degree of apprehension, as in the time of Cheyte Sing. There was no massacre, as in the rebellion of Vizier Ali. No one had to make his escape out of a window under cover of night, like Warren Hastings. No European party had to conceal itself in a field of tall maize. No messages had to be written in the smallest hand on small slips of paper, and sent rolled and put up in the ear-ring bores of the messengers. The loyalty of the Rajah was an example to the populace. Only the 4th of June, 1857, was a critical day. On the morning of that day, both the Sepoys and Sikhs at the station had been called on the parade. To the Sepoys was given the order to pile arms; they refused to obey. The officers sternly reiterated their order; the Sepoys stood in sullen refusal as before. No time was lost then to open a masked battery upon them. The wary Sepoys immediately fell prostrate on the ground, and, crawling on all fours, slunk away from the field. Unhappily, at the position where the Sikh troops stood, the shots thinned a few of their comrades. Suspecting this mischance to be a secret design laid against them, they were about to declare themselves in a state of open revolt. But the officers succeeded in disabusing their minds and restor-

which the high-caste Brahmins of Hindoostan made a last effort to revive their ancient hierarchy, this gathering of men has been disallowed to take place under the immediate ramparts of the fort. The priesthood at Allahabad formerly numbered nearly fifteen hundred families. In their numerical greatness, and impatience under the restraints imposed upon their greed, many of them presumed to take advantage of the rebellion. But by bidding defiance to the authority of their sovereign, they only placed themselves from the frying-pan into the fire. Those who had too anxiously desired to get quit of the Sahibs, whose presence hampered the free exercise of their rapacity, had to save their necks by breaking up and dispersing themselves—and who are now begging their bread in obscure towns, and hiding their heads under huts in the jungles. Their difficulty has become the pilgrim's opportunity.

After Benares, everything looks poor and paltry at Allahabad, and justifies its nickname of Fakeerabad. But when first impressions give way, the place is regarded with a better feeling. More sight-seeing really deserving of the name is enjoyed here than at the great ecclesiastical metropolis of India. There, things are seen only through the camera-obscura of religion. Here, are objects to gratify a rational mind. Allahabad is a large and straggling station. The houses are few and scattered over a considerable space. The town principally extends along the Jumna; but Daragunge on the Ganges in a populous quarter. The roads are broad, and shaded at intervals with fine old trees.

Ajoodhya and Allahabad were the first cities founded by the Aryan conquerors in the plains of India. To Pururavu, modern statesmen must concede the credit of forestalling them in the choice of this well-defended and central spot for the seat of Government. Forty centuries have effaced every trace of the scenes in which that monarch loved to indulge with his Urvasi—and of the city in which reigned the good kings of old Nahusa, Yayati, Puru, Dushyanta, and Bharat. In a place of such great antiquity and renown as this, it is a pity that no vestiges should exist to tell the tale of its former ages —that there should be no Hindoo monuments to give notions of ancient Hindoo history.

No fact connected with the name of Allahabad is so interesting, and at the same time so little known, as that of its having once been a *Republican State* in the heart of ancient India. To trace the royal lineage of Buddha, his biographers review, one by one, the various dynasties of Hindoo Princes, and take exception to the house of Pandoo, for its illegitimate origin. The line of the Benares Rajahs is dismissed for one reason—the line of the Kanouge Rajahs for another. The instance of Allahabad is rejected on the score of its having been a Republic, in which the people obeyed no Rajah. It would make an interesting chapter in the history of our nation, if research can elicit further matter about this ancient Hindoo state.

The name of Prayag must have been adopted in an age when superstition attached a peculiar sanctity to the spot. It was in use when Hwen Thsang came in the

seventh century. The Hindoo legends state the place to form a *Triveni*, or the meeting of three waters. One sees the Ganges and Jumna to form a magnificent confluence. But the third stream, Seraswattee, is in vain looked for with all the straining a man can give to his eyes. They say, she was coming down the country, but encountering on the way with hideous demons making a frightful noise, she disappeared among the sands on the north-west of Delhi. Travelling thence slowly and incognita beneath the earth, she at length met with Gunga and Jumoona at Allahabad. Tears trickled down her cheeks as she related the story of her misfortunes, and she had been too much affrighted to assume again her visible form. This is but a mystified allusion to the swallowing up of the river Seraswattee (Caggar) by a violent earthquake. The frightful noises are those which accompany the natural phenomenon of an agitation of the earth. The trickling tears refer, perhaps, to the percolating water, which oozes through the walls of a subterranean temple at the Prayag.

In Allahabad, the most conspicuous object of interest is the fort, which towers up with a massive face of rich red solid masonry from the waters of the Ganges and Jumna. The fort has the same best situation in all the town, that the town has in all India. Originally Hindoo-built, there is no knowing the age of this citadel. No doubt, it must have been an important stronghold, which has witnessed the rise and fall of many an ancient Hindoo prince —who should not be supposed to have carried on only a cat-and-dog warfare, or fought battles

like the frogs and mice of Homer. There is unimpeachable evidence of their having understood war, and all its manœuvres, sieges, and blockades, as known in their age. Their valour is attested by the Greeks to have been superior to that of any other Asiatic nation. Their armies were composed of the sextuple division of horse, foot, chariots, elephants, commissariat, and navy. In the art of fortification they were not less proficient. It was Menu's solemn advice to every Rajah, 'to build a strong fort with turrets and battlements in the place of his residence, and to protect it with a deep moat on all sides.' The effect of this authoritative dictum is well seen in the numerous hill-forts and others, which bristle yet in many parts of our peninsula. Judging from the remains of fortified works elsewhere, the ancient Hindoo fort of Allahabad may safely be presumed to have been a noble and impregnable stronghold, which was well fitted to stand against all catapults and battering-rams, but not against artillery; against all archery, but not against Armstrongs; against flotillas of boats and galleys dropping down the Jumna or Ganges, but not against steamers or floating wooden towers. Leaving in abeyance the question of superiority and inferiority between the father and the son, between the predecessor and the successor, between the forerunner and the outrunner,—there is no denying, that the Hindoo prince, whoever he may have been, who first fixed upon the site, and started the idea, and chalked out the circumvallation of this fortress, is entitled to the credit of having raised that key-stone of the empire, which at a

distant day served to decide the fate of the English in India.

Time, neglect, and the ravages of war had dismantled the Hindoo fort, by laying prostrate on the ground its towers and battlements in heaps of ruins. Only some bare walls stood weathering out the elements. The natural advantages of the spot and the hoary ruins attracted the observant eye of Akber. To guard his empire on the west he built the fort of Attock. To guard his empire on the east he rebuilt the fort of Allahabad. The massive walls raised by Hindoo hands, which yet stood their ground, were included in the new buildings. But improvements which had become necessary by a progress in the art of fortification, were introduced to meet the wants of the age. To the strength of high towers and ramparts 'garnished with Saracenic loop-holes, and embrasures, and peep-holes,' was added the beauty of splendid portals and palatial halls, to make the fort worthy of the greatest of all the Mahomedan rulers of India. Thus rebuilt and resuscitated, the fort once more resumed its importance in the land—and the name of Allahabad was conferred upon the city. The Hindoos are not wanting to ascribe a secret which influenced Akber in all these proceedings. They hold him to have been a Hindoo in a former birth—that he enclosed in his body the soul of a devout Brahmin, who had in a past age borne the name of Mucunda, and had taken a fancy to become the emperor of India—not at all a preposterous wish for a Brahmin of old, but which would in our age have proscribed him either to a mad-

house, or chains, or transportation beyond the seas. To attain the great object of his ambition, Mucunda had besought the intercession of the gods. The gods had declared to him, that unless he first died and was born again, it could not become practicable for him to obtain the emperorship. Nothing daunted, the ambitious Brahmin agreed to go through the penance of a transmigration, on condition of remembering his antecedents in the next generation. This again was so extravagant a request as to have been beyond the power of the gods to grant. He had, therefore, been directed to engrave upon a brass-plate the events he particularly wished to remember, and then to bury the plate in a spot which he was promised to be able to make out in his future life. Mucunda duly carried out the injunctions of the gods by going over to Prayag, burying the plate, and then burning himself to death. It pleased the gods to have him doomed to the probation of a short transmigration. In nine months after his death, he was permitted to generate in the womb of Sultana Hamida Banu, and to take his birth at Amercote in the character of Akber. That emperor had not been many years upon his throne, before he went over to Allahabad, and easily discovering the spot, dug up the brass-plate as well as the tongs, gourd, and deer-skin of his former anchorite existence. Indeed, there were ostensible grounds for the Hindoos to claim Akber as a prince of their race, when that emperor had a Hindoo wife—the princess Jodh Baie; had a Hindoo daughter-in-law—the Marwaree wife of Jehangeer;—had a Hindoo general

—the Rajah Maun Sing; had a Hindoo financier—the Rajah Toder Mull; had a Hindoo favourite—the Rajah Beerbul; had a Hindoo songster—Tansen: when he had many other Hindoo officers and Hindoo pundits always about him, when much in his court savoured of the Hindoo, and when he had in a manner Hindooized himself by his ardent devotedness to the cause of Hindoo welfare.

From the Hindoo to the Mahomedan—from the Mahomedan to the English, the fort has undergone a successive modernization. In its Mogul style, it typified a heavily-accoutred and unwieldy Mogul soldier. In its present state, it appears capped and buttoned up in a tight English uniform. If the castle now has a less imposing appearance, it has certainly gained in substantial strength from a more scientific plan of defence. The lofty towers of Mogul engineering 'have been pruned into bastions and ravelins on Vauban's system.' The high solid ramparts of stone have been topped with turf parapets. Then there is a 'fine broad glacis, with a deep ditch, draw-bridges, portcullis, and all the material appearances of a great fortress.' Nature and art so fortify this renowned citadel, that standing on a point enclosed by the barriers of two magnificent rivers, it bids defiance to every Native Power in India, and requires for its reduction a regular siege, according to European tactics. To a Bengalee, with his completely anti-military head and habits, the fort appears

'A mighty maze, but not without a plan.'

The importance of the fort of Allahabad was never so apparent as in the days of the Sepoy rebellion. In an early stage of that rebellion, Sir Henry Lawrence had telegraphed 'to keep Allahabad safe.' Sir James Outram 'wrote the most pressing and the most masterly state-paper respecting the paramount necessity of securing Allahabad,' and eventually it proved the ark of refuge to the English. One by one, all over Hindoostan, every cantonment had been burned, every garrison massacred, every jail let open, and every treasury plundered. Of that mighty Anglo-Indian Power, which held the heir of the house of Timoor under pension, which had overturned the thrones of Hyder and Runjeet, sold the state-jewels of Nagpore by public auction, exiled the king of Lucknow to a swamp on the Hooghly, sent an army to set up a king at Cabul, and equipped a fleet to chastise his Celestial Majesty, everything had suddenly collapsed. Throughout all Upper India, Allahabad remained the only spot for a footing. There, on the promontory in which the Doab has terminated, and behind the bulwarks round which break the foam of the Ganges and Jumna, hunted to the last asylum, the last strangers had turned desperately at bay. Though the country before them was like a raging sea upheaving with the waves of rebellion, and the country behind presented the same tempestuous scene,—though the City of Refuge floated like a tossing ship that expected every moment to founder in the storm, the feeble garrison of invalids, and aged drummers, and a miscellaneous party, resolutely stood their mile and a half of

ground. The eyes of all India had been turned upon the little but heroic band, playing at high stakes. Fighting against tropical heat, hunger, cannon, and enormous odds, the handful of men well sustained the hot debate,—till detachment after detachment, and brigade after brigade, swelled their numbers once more to subdue Hindoostan beneath the English yoke.

Facing the fort is a fine little *maidan* which separates it from the town. The entrance, lying through a magnificent portal, is the noblest that Bishop Heber ever witnessed for a place of arms. By itself, the gateway with its high arcades and galleries is not a contemptible post of strength. The sentinel moving beneath the archway, challenges all those under a dark skin who approach the draw-bridge without a passport. Inside the fort, the several barracks, the stores of artillery, the groups of soldiers at places, and other martial sights and sounds, give to it a thorough martial character. Just at the angle of the two rivers stands the great imperial hall of Akber, 272 feet long, which has been fitted up into a magnificent armoury. They show in this hall the traces of ancient Hindoo masonry. The Jumna rolls immediately below the buildings, and on it opens a small wicket, through which there is a little staircase of stone descending to the waters. The Mogul ladies formerly residing here used this as their bathing-ghaut.

The *Patalpooree*—a remarkable place, most probably once above-ground, but on which two united rivers have deposited their silt and formed a soil. We stood where

'the earth oped her ponderous and marble jaws,'—and saw the steps leading to a yawning cave. But beyond, a little way, the passage was blocked up by the stowage of coals. There is a prohibition now to admit pilgrims to see this cave in the fort, and it is being conveniently used as a warehouse. Fifteen years ago, some of our relatives visited this interesting cave. They had to grope their way through a very dark passage helped by the light of a feeble *choragh*. The confined air emitted a noisome smell. The saturated earth cooled their ardour by a chilling damp. The cave led them to a spacious square temple, about seven feet high, the roof of which is supported by thick walls and ranges of pillars. In its middle is a large *lingam* of Shiva, over which water is poured by the pilgrims. Surrounding this presiding deity, are other gods and goddesses of the Hindoo Pantheon. Towards the left, is seen a dead forked tree, which, with its withered trunk, has stood there for several hundred years. This is the stump of an *Ackhuybut* or immortal banyan—said to retain still its sap and vitality. But Tieffenthaler saw it leafless in his time, a century ago. This tree is also carefully watered by the pilgrims. Near it in the wall is an aperture, through which the percolating stream of the Seraswattee is shown to exude its waters. There is also another opening towards the confluence, and pilgrims in former times, choosing to explore this passage, often unawares or purposely found themselves in a watery grave.*

* 'Some of the victims of superstition annually drown themselves

If the Patalpooree is to be at all taken for a cave-temple, then it should rather be attributed to the Buddhists than to the Brahmins. It was the Buddhists who had a genius for cave-temples, left by them in many parts of India, and to whom they had become a necessity for pursuing their faith without molestation. The banyan tree—which is sacred to them and not to the Brahmins—greatly favours our supposition. Indeed, trees have from an early antiquity been held sacred in eastern systems of theology. The Hebrews had their Tree of Life, the Zoroastrians their *Homa*, and the Vedists their *Soma*. But it was not until the Buddhists had invested the banyan tree with a sacred character that veneration for trees came into sectarian fashion in India, and the *Bél* was dedicated to Shiva, and the *Toolsee* to Krishna. The temple must have fallen into the hands of the Shivites, like Ellora and Elephanta, to account for its having been turned into a shrine of their god. By no means is religious hostility so much gratified as by appropriating and converting the temple of an enemy into a shrine for the victorious—which is verily the trampling out of one sect by another. But

at the junction of the streams; and this being the most acceptable of all offerings, it is performed with much solemnity. The rapidity with which the victim sinks is regarded as a token of his favourable acceptance by the god of the river. To secure the good inclinations of the deity, they carry out the devoted person to the middle of the stream, after having fastened pots of earth to his feet. The surrounding multitude on the banks are devoutly contemplating the ceremony, and applauding the constancy of the victim, who, animated by their admiration, and the strength of his own faith, keeps a steady and resolute countenance, till he arrives at the spot, when he springs from the boat and is instantly swallowed up, amidst universal acclamation.' —*Tennant's Indian Recreation.*

all this ingenious speculation falls to the ground, by taking into consideration the unfitness of a small point of land jutting out into the rivers, for anything like works of excavation. Physically, it does not seem to be well adapted for such undertakings. The banyan tree also could not have lived and grown excluded from all sunshine and air. In all probability, the temple must have once stood on the surface of the land, and lain neglected for ages on the conquest of the Mussulmans, during which the Ganges and Jumna depositing their sediments over it, formed a layer of soil. To something like an accident it must have owed its discovery—since which it began to be regarded and used as a cave-temple. Now that it has been again closed up, it may remain so till it happens to turn open to the spades of a distant generation, like the vestiges of those savages whose rude stone instruments are found imbedded with the remains of antediluvian animals, or buried deep under peat bogs forming the remains of primeval forests.*

* Our concluding remarks are superfluous, as the kindness of a tolerant Government has again let open the temple to the visit of pilgrims. Not till the above had appeared in print, had we met with a copy of General Cunningham's Archæological Report, to find our surmises confirmed therein. It is stated by him, that, according to Hwen Thsang, 'Allahabad was situated at the confluence of the two rivers, but to the west of a large sandy plain. In the midst of the city there was a Brahminical temple, to which the presentation of a single piece of money procured as much merit as that of one thousand pieces elsewhere. Before the principal room of the temple there was a large tree with wide-spreading branches, which was said to be the dwelling of an anthropophagous demon. The tree was surrounded with human bones, the remains of pilgrims who had sacrificed their lives before the temple,—a custom which had been observed from time immemorial. I think there can be little doubt that the ramous tree here described by

The greatest of all curiosities in the fort is Bheema's Gada or Lat—the pillar of the Indian Hercules. Few objects met by the tourist in Hindoostan have the same intrinsic value that is possessed by the monolith, which rises a beautiful shaft thirty-five feet high from the ground, in the centre of the green sward facing the Ellenborough barracks. The cylindrical column of black granite, slightly tapering towards the top, has stood from a remote period, unaffected by fire or flood, and unhurt by the ravages of war. Covering its sur-

the Chinese pilgrim is the well-known *Akshay Bat*, or "shadowless banyan tree," which is still an object of worship at Allahabad. This tree is now situated under-ground at one side of a pillared court, which would appear to have been open formerly, and which is, I believe, the remains of the temple described by Hwen Thsang. Originally both tree and temple must have been on the natural ground-level, but from the constant accumulation of rubbish they have been gradually earthed up until the whole of the lower portion of the temple has disappeared under-ground. The upper portion has long ago been removed, and the only access to the *Akshay Bat* now available is by a flight of steps which leads down to a square pillared court-yard. This court has apparently once been open to the sky, but it is now closed in to secure darkness and mystery for the holy Fig tree. The *Akshay Bat* is next mentioned by Abu Rihan as the "tree of Prag" in the time of Mahmood of Ghizni. In the seventh century a great sandy plain, two miles in circuit, lay between the city and the confluence of the rivers, and as the tree was in the midst of the city, it must have been at least one mile from the confluence. But nine centuries later, in the beginning of Akber's reign, Abdul Kadir speaks of the "tree from which people cast themselves into the rivers." From this statement, I infer that, during the long period that intervened between the time of Hwen Thsang and that of Akber, the two rivers had gradually carried away the whole of the great sandy plain, and had so far encroached upon the city as to place the holy tree on the very brink of the water. As the old city of Prayag has totally disappeared, we can scarcely expect to find any traces of the various Buddhist monuments which were seen and described by the Chinese pilgrim in the seventh century. Indeed, from their position to the south-west of the city, it seems very probable that they may have been washed away by the Jumna even before the final abandonment of the city, as the course of that river for three miles above the confluence has been due west and east for many centuries past.'

face are inscriptions, the character of which has long become obsolete, and mocked the efforts of spectators to interpret their meaning. Generation after generation in successive ages have looked and marvelled at it, as an incomprehensible mystery. In the entire silence of history and tradition about it, in ignorance of its real origin and object, forgotten in the lapse of time, native popular opinion could scarcely have done better than identified it with the club of the heroic Bheema. But the time at length came, when the riddle which had puzzled the wits of many an Œdipus was solved,—when the mystery veiled in disused Pali was expounded to the world,—and when the pillar, revealed in all its intents and purposes, stood as a great landmark in the void of Indian history, separating the age of truth from that of fable and legend.

In the times when the art of printing was unknown, and mankind knew not to speak through the press, when placards and printed notifications had yet a long time before them to come into fashion, the ancient Buddhist kings of India employed durable rocks and marble fixtures for proclaiming their ukases and gazetting their edicts. The pillar in question is no more than one of these ancient fixtures, planted, with many others in different parts of India, upwards of two thousand years ago, by Asoca, to serve as a royal manifesto for prohibiting cruelty against animals, and calling upon the public of ancient India for the erection of hospitals and other charitable institutions throughout his empire. It was next made use of by Samudra Gup-

ta, about the second century of the Christian era, for the record of his extensive sovereignty over the various nations of India from Nepal to the Deccan, and from Guzerat to Assam. The principal inscriptions are in Pali, the language of ancient Maghada, and in the Gupta character. In all, there are four of them, including the Persian. This last one is by Jehangeer, who has interpolated his name and lineage through the middle of the most ancient of the three inscriptions —thereby making 'confusion worse confounded,' and exciting your

'Wonder how the devil he got in there.'

The column is obeliskal, and its top ornamented with carvings of the lotus or tulip. This similarity to the customs of the Egyptians is not accidental, but the result of a familiar intercourse with those people. All Asoca's columns appear to be of the same height—forty-two feet and seven inches, inclusive of the part underground. The one at Benares and the one at Allahabad measure exactly the same altitude. The columns were erected only in large, populous, and opulent cities. Though the capital of the Lunar Princes had been removed to Hastinapoor, and though Menu or the Mahabarat makes no allusion to the name of Allahabad, still its importance in the third century before Christ is established beyond a doubt by this column of Asoca. Up to this day, male and female Hindoo pilgrims returning from the north-west, speak of this column as the remarkable *Gada of Bheema*, though it is now a

quarter of a century since its meaning has been explained to the world by the man, to whose memory has been erected the ghaut from which Governors-General quit the shores of India.

In the Mogul times, Allahabad was the principality of the Mogul heir-apparent. Here Jehangeer exercised his Shazadaship—chiefly spending his time in the company of his young Marwaree wife, the sister of Rajah Maun. But before long, the Rajputnee princess put an end to her life by swallowing poison—disgusted as much to see her husband and son live upon terms of the cat and dog, as probably to drag on a life made intolerable by the nauseating breath of an onion-and-garlic-eating Mahomedan husband—a breath not less repugnant to a Hindoo woman than is the effluvium of cigars to an English woman.* It cost the English very little trouble to get possession of Allahabad. There was one Nujeef Khan, who was well acquainted with the fortress, and who pointed out the weakest part. It was speedily breached, and the garrison made no delay to evacuate the place.

Great numbers of Bengalees abound in Allahabad, some six thousand. Their errands are various—health, wealth, and pilgrimage. Our doctor had a friend here with whom we were to put up for the night. In search-

* Sleman relates 'that Noor Jehan had invited the mother of Khusero to look with her down a well in the court-yard of her apartments by moonlight; and as she did so, she threw her in. As soon as she saw that she had ceased to struggle she gave the alarm, and pretended that she had fallen in by accident.' This must refer to another rival whom Noor Jehan wanted to remove, and not to Khusero's mother.

ing their confidence. The news of unsuccessful disarmament threw the city into a great consternation. The Hindoo population trembled for the safety of their lives and properties. The English residents thought it for certain to have their throats cut. But contrary to all apprehension, the rebel Sepoys chose to disperse themselves in different directions. Full twenty-four hours elapsed without any visible sign of the danger. Not one Sepoy was heard to be tarrying in the neighbourhood. Next day, when the city was thought to have tided over its worst crisis, the excitement went down, and a feeling of security began gradually to return to men's business and bosoms.

The people most alarmed had been the Bengalees. They abound here some ten thousand in number. Their quarter is expressly called the *Bengalee-tola*. Once, in the days of the Pal sovereigns, the Bengalee was a man of conspicuous enterprise and military spirit. He then marched his armies to beyond the Indus, and ruled as the Suzerain of India. From a copper tablet discovered at Monghyr, Rajah Deva Pal Deva appears to have reigned in the ninth century as far as the Carnatic and Thibet. But the most glorious chapter in the history of the Bengalee has been quite forgotten. He is at present the most degenerate of all Indians. His country was regarded by the Moguls as little better than a Botany Bay—a backslum of India peopled by the worst of all men under the sun. The Hindoostanee would not condescend to own a nationality with him. He is particularly hated for aping the English, and was therefore

hounded and hunted by the rebels with a peculiar malignity. Our host, Baboo G——, told us that on the great panic-day he expected every moment to be numbered with the dead. He had removed with his family to the house of a confidential Hindoostanee friend, with whom he had previously arranged for an asylum in the event of an extreme crisis. He there kept himself in concealment for one whole day, praying for the speedy return of order. Many such instances had occurred in that dreadful year 'to show the stuff that the Bengalees were made of.' And yet there had been raised the cry to charge them with a sympathy for the cause of the rebels. The Bengalee character is the best defence against that charge. Of all the accused persons, the Bengalees were the most unlikely to have been concerned in the hazardous undertaking. Palsied Bengal is the least of all to be expected to brace its nerves for the most energetic of all human actions. The Bengalee has a talkative humour—no appetite for peril, no taste for cold steel. The most powerful motives which can induce a human being to face danger fail to rouse his sluggish nature, and he watches from a safe distance the battle on which depends his own fate, and the fate of his nation. In nothing is the Bengalee so competent as to take care of himself. The greatest of all his solicitudes is to run the smallest risk of hurt—to preserve his neck from a scrape. He can speak daggers, but can look nor use none. The 'hue of his resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' His most favourite maxim is that 'prudence is the better part of valour.'

Of his own shortcomings, of his non-military character, none is so well aware as the Bengalee himself. He is fully conscious that his unwarlike habits are incompatible with his state of independence. He knows very well, that if the English were to leave him master of himself this day, he would on the next have to apply to the British Parliament for succour with epistles styled *The Groans of the Bengalee.* He would have to represent that the Mussulmans and Hindoostanees, on the one hand, chase him into the sea and forests; the sea and forests, on the other, throw him back upon the Mussulmans and Hindoostanees. 'Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice'—a Young Bengal as yet has only the 'nodosities of the oak without its strength, and the contorsions of the sibyl without the inspiration.'

Excursion to *Sarnath*, which is about three miles and a half north from the outskirts of the city. It falls within the sacred enclosure of the Panch-kosi road, that, having a circumference of fifty miles, forms the boundary of the jurisdiction of Biseswara, and is guarded and defended by the deified *Kotwal* Bhoyrubnath, his Dandpan, and other agents, from evil spirits and evil persons—or, in other words, which marks the traditional extent of Benares that covered the area within its circuit in the remote Hindoo ages. The city thus circumscribed refers to that most ancient city of the early Brahminic and Buddhistic epochs—of the Gupta and Pal periods, which occupied a more inland site and extended within more enlarged limits than is done by modern Benares. Of the existence of this great city,

the remains at Sarnath and on the banks of the Barana afford the most convincing proofs. Sarnath is spoken of in the Ceylon annals as having formed an integral part of ancient Benares. It is famous amongst the Buddhists as the scene where Buddha 'turned the wheel of the law,' and may be distinguished as having been the Buddhist Benares from that of the Brahmins. The name of Sarnath, construed to mean the 'Bull-Lord' as well as the 'Best Lord,' is said to have been derived from a small Brahminical temple of Shiva, on the spot. But, most probably, the appellation is Buddhistic, and has a reference to Buddha under the name of *Sarangnath*, or the 'Lord of Deer,' to confirm which supposition there is still a lake called *Sarang Tal*, as well as a *ramna*, or antelope preserve, in the neighbourhood. Sarnath must be supposed to have been in its highest splendour under the Gupta kings of Maghada and the Pal kings of Gour. Its destruction must be traced to the antagonism of the Brahmins, and is to be dated from the middle of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century. In the lapse of ages, there has accumulated a soil under which lie buried the ruins of the temples, colleges, hospitals, and tombs of a people, who have ceased to exist for eight long centuries. Until lately, numerous statues and idols of Buddhistic worship, together with many carved stones, were strewed about the spot, but which were carted away and thrown into the Barana to serve as a breakwater to the piers of the bridge over that stream.

Dhamek, which is probably an abbreviation of the

Sanscrit *Dharma-opodesaka*, or the Teacher of Wisdom, is the great stone Buddhist *stupa* that forms the principal object of curiosity at Sarnath. It is a solid round tower, 93 feet in diameter at the base, and 110 feet above the surrounding ruins, but 128 feet above the general level of the country. The lower part of the structure, to a height of 43 feet, is built entirely of Chunar stone, and the upper part of large bricks that were in fashion amongst the ancient Hindoos. The building is ornamented with beautiful niches, and richly carved bands forming scrolls of the lotus plant, 'with graceful stalks, delicate leaves, tender buds, and full-blown flowers.' There are also elegant representations of the *Chackwa* or Brahmini Geese, as well as human figures seated upon lotus flowers, and holding branches of that plant in their hands. 'With the single exception of the Taj Mahal at Agra,' says General Cunningham, 'there is no other Indian building that has been so often described as the great Buddhist tower at Sarnath.' It is said to have been built by Asoca on the spot where Buddha first turned the wheel of the law, and forms a building twenty-one centuries old. Fa Hian saw it in the beginning of the fifth century, and distinguishes it as one of 'the eight divine towers commemorating the acts of Buddha's terrestrial career.' Hwen Thsang visited it a hundred and forty years later, and saw enshrined in it 'a copper figure of Buddha represented in the act of turning the wheel of the law' —or a statue of Buddha the Teacher, 'with his hands raised over his breast, and the thumb and forefinger of

the right hand placed on the little finger of the left hand for the purpose of enforcing his argument.' In these times, many a scientific gentleman is attracted to visit the curious and venerable tower for archæological investigation. In the opinion of Major Kittoe, 'the arrangement of this tower was precisely the same as at Rangoon, rows and rows of small temples, umbrellas, pillars, &c., around the great tope.'

In the neighbourhood of the Dhamek, is the ruin of another large brick *stupa*. In 1794 this tower was first excavated by the Dewan of Cheyte Sing to obtain bricks for the erection of a bazar, when 'two vessels of stone and green marble, one inside the other, had been discovered, the inner vessel containing a few human bones, some decayed pearls, gold leaves, and other jewels of no value, along with a statue of Buddha, bearing an inscription dated in Samvat 1083, A.D. 1026.' It is recorded in this inscription, that 'Mahi Pala, Rajah of Goura (Bengal), having worshipped the lotus-like feet of Sree Dharmarasi (Buddha), caused to be erected in Kasi hundreds of *Isana* and *Chitraghanta*. Sri *Sthira* Pal and his younger brother *Vasanta* Pal having restored religion, raised this tower with an inner chamber and eight large niches.' This was a relic tower, supposed to have originally been a hemispherical *stupa*, 82 feet in diameter, and not less than 50 feet in height. It has been reduced to a ruin by the vandalism of Cheyte Sing's Dewan.

Choukandi, or *Luri-ka-kodan*, so called from the leap of an *Ahir* by the name of Luri from its top, is a lofty

mound of solid brickwork, surmounted with an octagonal building. Hwen Thsang describes this tower to have been 'no less than 300 feet in height. The lofty monument sparkled with the rarest and most precious jewels. It was not ornamented with rows of niches, neither had it the usual bell-shaped cupola, but its summit was crowned with a sort of religious vase, turned upside down, on the top of which was an arrow.' The upper portion of the building no longer exists, and the mound in question has lost much of its original loftiness—measuring now not more than 98 feet in height. The octagonal building on the top was raised by Hoomayoon, with an inscription over one of the doorways, recording its erection as a memorial of that emperor's ascent of the mound.

The once flourishing condition of Sarnath, is perhaps mysteriously alluded to in the *Kasi-khund*. The account of the glorious reign of Divodasa, and the universal adoption of Buddhism by the males and females of the city, may be understood as referring to the beneficent administration of the Buddhist Kings of Gour, and their conversion of Benares into a Buddhistic city. The humiliation of the Shivites seems to be indicated by the myth of Shiva's exit from Benares, and his exile on Mount Mandar. The god is represented as having become disconsolate for the loss of his favourite city, and to have at various times had recourse to the aid of Brahma, Surya, Ganesha, and others for its recovery. This is, perhaps, meant to state that the various sects of those divinities, embarking in a common cause, made

only fruitless efforts from time to time to subvert a religion which had the powerful support of the sovereign. The hopeless Shivites had to bide their time till the Rajahs of Kanouge, becoming predominant in the land, annexed Benares under their sway in the eleventh century. The Kanougians of that period were stanch believers in the Puranic creed. It was from Kanouge that Bengal had afterwards to indent for Brahmins to restore Hindoo orthodoxy in that benighted and heretic land. The success of the Kanougians produced a strong reaction in favour of the Shivites. They now rose up in arms, and put forth their whole strength for the reentry of Shiva into Benares—the restitution of his worship in that city. Never did sect over sect triumph with such signal success. The Buddhists were overpowered rapidly, completely, and for ever. Their temples and towers were razed to the ground so as not to leave a trace of them behind. The images of their gods were torn from their shrines, defaced and broken, and then flung into the streets. Their monasteries and colleges were attacked as dens of heresies. The monks of the one, and the professors of the other, were hunted with an implacable revenge. The inhabitants were attacked, and allowed no refuge but in flight and dispersion. All Sarnath was reduced to ashes, and in that fair city reigned only desolation and silence. The vestiges yet discernible bear abundant marks of the agency of fire, which had been employed by the Brahmins to exterminate their enemies, and uproot all landmarks of the existence of Sarnath. To quote Major

Kittoe: 'all has been sacked and burnt, priests, temples, idols, all together. In some places bones, iron, timber, idols, &c., are all fused into huge heaps; and this has happened more than once.' Proofs of a great final catastrophe by fire have been afforded by 'pieces of charred wood with nails sticking in some of them,' 'stores of unhusked rice only partially burnt,' and 'evident traces of fire on the stone pillars, umbrellas, and statues.' From 'the remains of ready-made wheaten cakes,' and from 'portions of wheat and other grain spread out in one of the cells,' the destruction of Sarnath is concluded to have been 'both sudden and unexpected.' Such a conclusion is well borne out by the following account of Mr Thomas, late Judge of Benares:—'The chambers on the eastern side of the square were found filled with a strange medley of uncooked food, hastily abandoned on their floors,—pottery of everyday life, nodes of brass produced apparently by the melting down of the cooking vessels in common use. Above these again were the remnants of the charred timbers of the roof, with iron nails still remaining in them, above which again appeared broken bricks mixed with earth and rubbish to the height of the extant walls, some six feet from the original flooring. Every item here bore evidence of a complete conflagration, and so intense seems to have been the heat, that in portions of the wall still standing, the clay, which formed the substitute for lime in binding the brick-work, is baked to a similar consistency with the bricks themselves. In short, all existing indications lead to a necessary inference that

the destruction of the building, by whomsoever caused, was effected by fire applied by the hand of an exterminating adversary, rather than by any ordinary accidental conflagration.'

The work of excavation at Sarnath had been going on until a recent period. The idols and sculptures dug up from that place have scarcely turned out in an entire state. Many of these curiosities are deposited in the museum of the Benares College. Among the various articles exhumed the most remarkable are 'pestles and mortar *sills* (or flat stones for mashing), *loongas*, &c., &c., found in a large quadrangle or *hospital*,' 'fine specimens of carved bricks;' 'heads of Buddha, made of pounded bricks and road-earth, coated with fine shell-lime, in beautiful preservation;' 'a fine head of a female in white marble (partly calcined), and a portion of the arm;' 'two stone umbrellas, one in fragments (*burnt*) of six feet diameter, mushroom-shaped, and another, *also burnt*, but not broken, elegantly carved in scroll on the inside, but nearly defaced by the action of saltpetre;' 'a square, elaborately corniced block, that was the seat of the Teacher for the daily reading and expounding of the Buddhist Scriptures;' and 'an impression in burnt clay, of a seal, 1½ inch in diameter, with two lines of Sanscrit, surmounted by a lozenge-shaped device, with two recumbent deer as supporters.' The device of the two deer is said to prove that the seal belonged to a monk of the Deer Park monastery at Sarnath, whose name is stated in the inscription to have

been *Sri Saddharma Rakshita*, or the cherisher of the true Dharmma.

According to Hwen Thsang, there were no less than 30 monasteries at Sarnath, containing about 3000 monks. These edifices must have been of various ages—having been built from time to time during the ascendancy of Buddhism from the time of Asoca to that of the Gupta dynasty. Their number must have increased under the Pal kings of Bengal. Few of the Buddhistic buildings have escaped the ruthless hand of spoliation. The Brahmins demolished the greater number of them, and raised upon their sites temples, which in their turn were again converted into mosques by the Mahomedans. Upon the sites of Buddhist temples and from the materials of Buddhist monasteries, did the Brahmins build their shrines of Ad-Biseswara, of Kirt-Biseswara, of Banee Madhoo, the Bakarya Koond, and others. Many of these fell into the hands of the Mussulmans, and were altered and modified by them to form the Mosque of Aurungzebe, the Kangura Mosque, the Alamgiri Mosque, and the Choukhamba Mosque. Of the early *Vedist* Benares there probably exist no remains, and supposing them to do, it is difficult to recognize them. But the *débris* of Buddhist Benares 'may be traced in the multitude of carved stones, portions of capitals, shafts, bases, friezes, architraves, and so forth—inserted into modern buildings in the northern and north-western quarters of the city. These fragments exhibit a great diversity of style, from the severely simple to the exceedingly ornate,

and are in themselves a sufficient proof of the former existence of buildings, of styles of architecture corresponding to themselves, yet differing in many important respects from the styles of modern Hindoo and Mahomedan structures, and coinciding with those of ancient temples and monasteries of the Gupta and pre-Gupta periods, the ruins of which are still existing in various parts of India.' It either indicates a great ignorance or deep craftiness of the present Brahmins to state that Benares forms the city of Shiva from an unfathomable antiquity, when Buddha had been worshipped there for more than a thousand years, when the temple of Ad-Biseswara may be detected to have been raised upon the ruins of a Buddhist monastery, and when the Kasi of the early Hindoos occupied a different site from that of Benares, which, in popular tradition, is said to have been built and named by Rajah Banar, probably at some period between the fifth and eighth centuries of the Christian era—a period remarkable for the influence once possessed by the followers of Shiva, and for those desolating wars of *Sambhu* and *Ni-sambhu* (Shivites and Buddhists), which are magnified to have been the most bloody in the annals of Hindoo warfare.

CHAPTER VII.

October 26.—FAST as four wheels and a four-legged animal could carry us, we were on our way to Allahabad. The night was high when we passed by Gopigunge, missing that place of mutiny-notoriety. By eight o'clock this morning we had glibly rolled over a road seventy-two miles long, and stood upon the left bank of the Ganges. On the other side rose in view the city of Pururava, the Pratishthana of the Aryas, the Prayag of the Puranists, and the Allahabad of Akbar. The river intervened, and on its surface lay the bridge of boats floating like a leviathan. The bridge was yet incomplete for an opening in the middle,—and it told much against our patience to lose two precious hours in crossing by the ferry of a primitive age.

The first thing we did on landing was to go at once to the famous *prayag* or junction of the Ganges and Jumna. It was not until standing upon that tongue of land, where the two holy streams have met, that we felt ourselves really in the city of *Allahabad*. The Ganges at Calcutta is scarcely an interesting object to the dull eye of familiarity. The Ganges at Benares is forgotten in the more absorbing associations of the city of Shiva.

But the Ganges at Allahabad is contemplated as the eternal river, which rolls on, watering the fairest valley of the earth, and forms the imperial highway on which pass and repass ten thousand fleets through every day of the year. From the grandeur of its aspect and its importance in the economy of nature, it has become an object of the most devout veneration alike in the eyes of the Brahmaites, Shivites, and Vishnuvites. There is the floating bridge of boats—in which a warmer imagination than ours might see the fabled elephant which vaunted to withstand the force of its mighty stream.

The Jumna, a novel sight, was for the first time beheld, with enthusiasm. Deeply sunk below high craggy banks, rolled slowly on a sluggish stream of crystal blue water. This was the Jumna—the *Kalindi* of our forefathers, a name associated in the Hindoo mind with the adventures of many an ancient Rajah and Rishi—the loves of Radha and Krishna. The spot where the sister Nuddees (Greek Naiades) meet, makes a magnificent prospect. The Ganges has a turbid, muddy current—the Jumna, a sparkling stream. Each at first tries to keep itself distinct, till, happy to meet after a long parting, they run into each other's embrace, and losing themselves into one, flow in a common stream. The Ganges strikes the fancy as more matronly of the two —the Jumna, a gayer youthful sister.

There is certainly more of poetry than philosophy in all the religions professed by mankind. The 'Swerga' of the Puranists, the 'Paradise' of the Mahomedans, and the 'Last Judgment Day' of the Christians, trans-

cend all Homeric poetry. Religion is diffident to address itself purely to the understanding, which is cold and cautious to accept its statements. It therefore seeks the aid of poetry to help its cause. This explains the reason why lovely spots and romantic heights are particularly chosen for places of worship. There is scarcely a lovelier spot than the *prayag* of Allahabad. The broad expanse of waters, the verdant banks, and the picturesque scenery, tell upon the mind and fascinate the pilgrim. Here, therefore, has superstition fixed a place for purification, through which it is obligatory on a Hindoo to pass on his arrival at Allahabad. The purification falls little short of an ordeal. You have first to submit yourself to the application of the razor from the top of the head to the toes of the feet—the eyebrows and eyelashes even not forming exceptions; and for every hair thus thrown off, you are promised 'a million of years' residence in heaven.' Few rites are more absurd in the history of superstition, and it is unaccountable why no other has been preferred to this shocking operation—when hairs have their so great importance in physiology, and their value in the esteem of beauty. Milton has adorned his Adam with 'hyacinthine locks' and Eve with 'dishevelled tresses.' The 'Rape of the Lock' sets forth the inestimable value of a lady's ringlet. Long beards gave name to a nation—the Lombards. A Sikh is never so much offended as when you touch him by the beard—the great facial characteristic of manhood, never allowed by him to be profaned by the razor. Ask a doctor, and he will say he has known women in a

high delirium refuse at the sacrifice of their lives to part with their hair, given them 'to draw hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.' But squatting in little booths erected upon the edge of the waters, and mumbling their prayers like the gibberish inflicted in swearing a jury, do the Pandas of Allahabad contrive to sheep-shear their pilgrims without distinction of sex, age, or rank. The male pilgrim strips himself almost naked, and sits to pass through the hands of the barber. There were some half dozen men whom we saw to undergo the process of hideous disfigurement. The fellows looked, sans their eye-brows, like idiots past all hope, and unrecognizable even by their own mothers. Certainly, the ceremony is 'more honoured in the breach than in the observance.'

In the Hindoo calendar, this month of October is especially sacred for ablution. If it were possible to take in a photograph of the Ganges from the Himalayas to the sea,—how its banks would present an endless succession of *ghauts*, all crowded with men and women, some dipping, others sipping, and the rest worshipping, in every imaginable form of devotion. But the especial great *mela* here is held every year on the full moon in January—*Maghai Prayagai*, as the common Hindoo saying goes. The holy fair lasts then about two months, and attracts people from far and near. The whole space that is seen to extend from the extreme point of the junction to the Mahratta Bund, is then covered with tents and temporary shops. The place is then thronged by devotees, mendicants, merchants, and sight-seers of all castes and professions. But since the mutiny, in

ing for his house was best disclosed to us the straggling character of the city. To the question where such a one lived, the reply was *doh coss;* where the Kydgunge, *doh coss;* where the Colonelgunge, the Chowk, the Railway station, the invariable reply was *doh coss.* Coming unexpectedly in a battalion upon our host, it did not inconvenience him in the least to give us a hearty welcome. In the true spirit of a fast money-making and money-expending Kayust, Baboo N—— is accustomed to keep an open house and table for all his friends passing on, and from, a tour to the Upper Provinces. He gave us lots of good eating and drinking, and comfortable housing in an upper-room. The night was spent up to a late hour in hearing tales of the mutiny,—which is, and long shall be, the topic in every man's mouth all over the land. They speak of it as a fearful epoch of unexampled atrocities on the one side,—and of an unparalleled retaliation on the other. There were the Sepoys with the blood of murdered officers on their heads, and budmashes and bullies, and cut-throats and cut-purses, all acknowledging a fraternal tie, and holding a bloody carnival. But it was impossible that twenty uncongenial parties, divided by quarrels about caste, quarrels about religion, quarrels about power, and quarrels about plunder, could long act together in an undisturbed concert. Soon as batch after batch of Englishmen arrived to re-establish the Saxon rule, they were driven like chaff before the wind. Then followed a dreadful sequel—the horror of horrors. The Martial Law was an outlandish demon, the like of which had

not been dreamt of in Oriental demonology. Rampant and ubiquitous, it stalked over the land devouring hundreds of victims at a meal, and surpassed in devastation the *Rakhasi* or female cannibal of Hindoo fables. It mattered little whom the red-coats killed—the innocent and the guilty, the loyal and the disloyal, the well-wisher and the traitor, were confounded in one promiscuous vengeance. To 'bag the nigger,' had become a favourite phrase of the military sportsmen of that day. 'Pea-fowls, partridges, and Pandies rose together, but the latter gave the best sport. Lancers ran a tilt at a wretch who had taken to the open from his covert.' In those bloody assizes, the bench, bar, and jury were none of them in a bland humour, but were bent on paying off scores by rudely administering justice with the rifle, sword, and halter—making up for one life by twenty. 'The first spring of the British Lion was terrible, its claws were indiscriminating.'

There came in a friend, who knew about the mutiny at Allahabad, from its beginning to the end. He then lived with his family at Daragunge, carrying on business in country produce. There were other Bengalees living about him, and forming a clique. They had been placed, as it were, upon a barrel of gunpowder for many days. The firing in the cantonments at length told them of the explosion which everybody had expected to burst. It was a signal to the *budmashes* to rise at once in all quarters. The Bengalees cowered in fear, and awaited within closed doors to have their throats cut. The women raised a dolorous cry at the

near prospect of death. From massacring their officers, and plundering the treasury, and letting open the jail-birds, the Sepoys spread through the town to loot the inhabitants. Our friend, as well as his other neighbours, were soon eased of all their valuables, but were spared their lives on promise of allegiance to their government. The first shock over, the Bengalees opened a communication with those in the fort for help. But what help could be afforded by those who were in need of help themselves? They then proceeded to take measures of defence against the *budmashes*, and organized a body of forces with the aid of a wealthy Hindoostanee, who resided in their quarter. The Sepoys made many efforts to take the fort, but all in vain. During one whole week after the struggle had begun in earnest, on arrival of the first instalment of troops, people did not know where to lay their heads from the unremitting hail of shot and shell showered from the fort on the streets and bazars of the city. It might be exaggerated to have 'darkened the sun,'—though the Pandies were not exactly the men to 'fight in the shade.' Familiarity with danger gradually lessened its terrors—the very women grew bold in their desperation. Our friend remarked, that at last he got himself so unconcerned as to walk in an open verandah of his house, while red-hot balls passed overhead through the air. Daragunge had especially been a turbulent quarter, and it had been ordered to be burnt down. The Bengalees went on this in a body, with the most melancholy and woe-begone faces, to represent their fate.

But they were told that an order could not be re-called. By much importunate solicitation, they prevailed on the officers to see that order fulfilled only in the conflagration of the outskirt huts, where lived those *budmash manjees* who had broken the bridge of boats on Neill's approach. One night our friend had to drop down through a window of his house, to save a coolie from the hands of a soldier on picquet. The coolie had been moving about in the dark without answering to the challenge of the man on duty. The soldier at last pointed his gun at the stolid fellow, when our friend, jumping out, went up to the man to explain that the coolie did not understand his challenge, and was no *budmash*.

One's blood still runs cold to remember the soul-harrowing and blood-freezing scenes that were witnessed in those days. There were those who had especial reasons to have been anxious to show their rare qualification in administering drumhead justice. Scouring through the town and suburbs, they caught all on whom they could lay their hands—porter or pedlar—shopkeeper or artisan, and hurrying them on through a mock-trial, made them dangle on the nearest tree. Near six thousand beings had been thus summarily disposed off and launched into eternity. Their corpses hanging by twos and threes from branch and sign-post all over the town, speedily contributed to frighten down the country into submission and tranquillity. For three months did eight dead-carts daily go their rounds from sunrise to sunset, to take down

the corpses which hung at the cross-roads and market-places, poisoning the air of the city, and to throw their loathsome burdens into the Ganges.

Others, whose indignation had a more practical turn, sought to make *capital* out of those troublous times. The martial law was a terrible Gorgon in their hands to turn men into stone. The wealthy and timid were threatened to be criminated, and they had to buy up their lives as they best could under the circumstances.

Not a few Bengalees had then arrived under the disguise of Fakirs and Byragees, to seek refuge at Allahabad. Many of them had got real splendid beards, to suit the characters they shammed. From all those who had then mourned that—

> Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
> When from *Bengal Proper* they bent their way—

one noble instance stood out most conspicuous. Though a native from an obscure village on the Hooghly, and unused to the warlike mood, he held his position defiantly, organized forces, made sallies, planned attacks, burnt villages, wrote despatches to thank his subordinates, and made himself deserving to be remembered in history under the soubriquet of the 'Fighting Moonsiff.'

October 27th.—Up early in the morning. Found the compound of our lodge crowded by a large gang of rustic Hindoostanee women, who were squatting in a long row, and indulging fully in their loquacity. They clean grain at the warehouse of our host, and receive a couple of annas a day per head for their labour. They were come for their previous day's pay, and were cla-

morous to get it, and go about their work. Our new faces made them hold their tongues for a moment, which it is female modesty to do. Though most of them appeared to have passed their middle age, they had all of them tall, healthy frames, with a coarse set of features. Those that were widows had no bell-metal armlets or bangles on their feet and arms. One creature in the company had a tolerably good cut of face, and was by no means unpleasant to look upon, with her pair of soft eyes. Their bodies were all tattooed over in fantastic figures. This operation is undergone by them at the tender age of five or six, from time to time, on different parts of their body, when, in many instances, they have to be laid up under a most painful inflammation. It is an initiatory rite, without which food and water do not become acceptable from their hands. Contrary to our notions, they think the tattooed flowers and wreaths to add a grace to their persons—or otherwise, females would have been the last to observe a custom that interfered with their beauty.

The upward train from Allahabad starts at four in the afternoon,—so the whole day is left to us to spend it in exploring the town. In many parts it still has a desolate, poverty-stricken appearance, and consists of thatched huts, with a few brick-houses at intervals. The *Duria-ghaut* on the Jumna is a sacred spot. They say that Rama, with his wife and brother Luchmun, crossed here at this ghaut, on their way from Ajoodhya to go over to the land of their exile. He passed by this place to give a visit to his friend Goohuk Chandal.

But it was a long time after Rama, that the Chundail kings of Chunar made their appearance in India, and held Allahabad under their sway. There is properly no ghaut with a flight of steps at the spot to do justice to the memory of Rama. The concourse of people, however, bathing there in this holy month presents a lively scene—with groups of Hindoostanee women performing their matin rites, and returning home in processions clothed in drapery of the gayest colours. The Rajah of Benares has a fine villa in the neighbourhood of this ghaut.

Not far below the Duria-ghaut they were busy at the site of the intended Railway bridge over the Jumna. In two years, they have sunk about twenty shafts. The pits, more than forty feet deep, are awful. They lie side by side of each, and have extremely narrow brinks to walk from one to the other. Three or four lives have been lost in sinking the shafts, and it is difficult to get men for the work. The diver has to remain below for half the day. One man had just been taken up as we arrived. He was below forty feet of water for six hours together. But on taking off his waterproof coat, his body was found to have been untouched by a single drop of water—only the hands were dripping and shrivelled. The face also showed a little paleness on removal of the diving-helmet. But he came to himself again after a few minutes in the open air. The shafts have collected a little *chur* about them —and this is to be the foundation for a bridge to ride triumphantly across the Jumna.

The *Jummah Musjeed*, or the Mahomedan Cathedral, is a stately old building. The pork-eating Feringhee having desecrated it by his abode, it has ceased to be used as a place of worship by the sons of Islam. But not far from this mosque do the Hindoos worship a very image of the hog, under the name of *Baraha*. The boar personifies the second incarnation of Vishnu, who raised the earth on his tusks from the bottom of the ocean. 'It were better to have no notion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of him'—than blaspheming him as a fish, a pig, and a tortoise.

In Allahabad they show the sacred *asrama* or hermitage of Bhradwaj Muni, a Hindoo sage of Vedic antiquity, and the great forefather of our present *Mookerjee* Brahmins. The spot is classic, and deserves a visit. To the *coteers* of our ancient Munis, where they lived in seclusion amidst their books and pupils, may be traced the etymon and origin of the modern European *coteries*.

One spends a pleasant hour at Allahabad in visiting the *Chusero Bagh*. The garden is a large quadrangle, enclosed by a high masonry wall, in as good an order now as when first reared. The entrance lies through a noble gateway, which is in half-Gothic form. Fitting the lofty arch are enormous doors, that turn upon pointed wooden pivots in lieu of hinges. It is now two centuries and a half since the planks first left the carpenter's hands. But the strength of the Indian teak has resisted wear and tear through all this time, without any mark of decay. The space within is laid

out in beautiful walks and flower-beds. The patches of turnip and cauliflower console foreigners in a strange land. The fruit-trees are various, and the groves of veteran mangoes magnificent. There is also a little labyrinth of evergreens to puzzle and amuse holiday-visitors.

In the middle of the Bagh are three mausoleums—two over the Princes Chusero and Purvez, and a third over the Marwaree Begum of Jehangeer. The tombs are all on the model of a Mahomedan *Tazia*. The one belonging to the lady has a little peculiarity in distinction of her sex. She reposes by the side of her unhappy son, as if tending him with her maternal cares even in eternity. But they do not allow her to have a quiet sleep—the upper floor of her tomb has been fitted up into a billiard-room, and the bones of the poor lady labour under a sore incubus.

The ill-fated Chusero lies between his mother and brother, and has the grandest tomb among the group. His remains are interred in the vaulted chamber, round which spreads a square terrace forming the first stratum of the building. The small size of the sarcophagus confirms the death of Chusero in an early age. The walls of the lofty octagon rising in the middle, are outwardly ornamented with many decorations. The interior is beautifully painted, in which some of the foliage and flowers still retain their dye. The dome on the top swells beautifully out into a faultless globe. In the opinion of Bishop Heber, these mausoleums 'completely give the lie to the notion common in England, which

regards all Eastern architecture as in bad taste and barbarous.'

Adjoining the garden is a spacious *serai*, which gives a specimen of the Mogul public works. The rooms all round the square are still in good order to accommodate travellers. But in the open square is held the noisy fish and vegetable market of the town. To the serai is attached a deep well. From the bottom to the top, its sides are built up with strong masonry. The part left open to go down to the waters, has a large flight of steps resembling a ghaut. This well has acquired a great notoriety from the Moulivie, who had set up the standard of *Deen* at Allahabad, and who so prominently figured in the scenes of rebellion enacted in that city. To take in people, he used to spread a magic carpet covering the mouth of this well, and sitting thereon rosary in hand, attracted large multitudes to witness his miracle, and hear his pious harangues against Nazarene domination. The ignorant rabble wondered at the secret of his supernatural feat, and believing invincible the man who could resist gravitation, justified his treason and eagerly embraced his cause.

Up in these provinces, the *Shoe-question* has all the grave political importance of the Slave-question in America—and the force of a statutory law in the Mofussal officialdom. Our lawyer had to attend a case before the magistrate. He was forbid to enter the Court with his shoes on. On no account would the lawyer be unshod. On no account would the magistrate give up his punctilio. The lawyer remonstrated, the

magistrate persisted. For full ten minutes the war of words went on, much to the amusement of the bystanders; till at last the magistrate proposed a choice between taking off the shoes and taking off the pugree—between bare feet and a bare head, the two opposite extremes for European and Oriental etiquette. The lawyer immediately doffed his pugree. The magistrate forthwith resumed his courtesy—and there was an end of the *battle of the shoes*.

In the dispute about the site of Palibothra, the great French geographer, Mons. D'Anville, gave the palm to Allahabad. But there is in Strabo a very particular allusion to a grand causeway leading from Palibothra into the interior of the country. Unless this causeway had been either over the Ganges or Jumna,—where is the river, channel, or any description of water whatsoever, which could have necessitated the erection of that causeway?

Tieffenthaler saw this place full of temples and idols in his time. But in all Allahabad there now rises only a single temple to break in upon the view. There is scarcely any activity of trade in this town, any bustle upon the river, any rumbling of coaches and carts in the streets, or any throng of merchants and porters on the thoroughfares. The population is scattered, and much too thin for a city of such magnitude. The houses are poor, and the shops mean. The native community makes no stir in any of the important concerns of life—in religion, trade, education, politics, or pleasure,—everything languishes at Allahabad. But all this ennui is

soon to be at an end. There is a question on the tapis to make Allahabad the seat of the North-Western Presidency. Hereafter, the excellent geographical position, the strength of the natural boundaries, the fine climate, and the great resources of the neighbouring provinces, may point the place out for the seat of the Viceroy himself. Two years ago, here was uttered the dirge over the funeral of the late East India Company,—here was inaugurated the era of the Sovereignty of the Queen, with royal promises of pardon, forgiveness, justice, religious toleration, and non-annexation,—and here was Lord Canning installed as the first Viceroy of India.

Once more to move on by rail to Cawnpore. The station at Allahabad is not half so large as that at Howrah. But it is very picturesque to look at the up-country train with its vari-coloured turbaned Hindoostanee passengers. They use here wood instead of coal, and the great evil of it is, that you are liable to catch fire from the sparks—sometimes pieces of red-hot charcoal—from the engine. 'The other day, as a detachment of Sikh soldiers were going up-country, one of them had his clothes set on fire by the embers. All his comrades were dressed in cotton-quilted tunics, with their pouches full of ammunition; and in their alarm they adopted the notable device of pitching the man out of the window, in order to get rid of the danger to which they were exposed.'

There now lay before us the prospect of the extensive, beautiful, and historic valley of the Doab—the *Anterved* of the ancient Hindoos. From the narrow point in

which it has terminated, the valley broadens as it stretches away towards the west, embracing a greater and greater area between the Ganges and Jumna, that form the highways of nature,—while the rail laid across between them forms the rival highway of man. The whole of its immense superficies forms a vast, populous, and busy hive, enriched by human industry, and embellished by human taste. On the map, no country is so thickly dotted with great townships and cities,—and under the sun, no country makes up such a highly interesting prospect of green fields, orchards, and gardens, in a continuous succession. In this fair *saranah* man has had his abode from a remote antiquity, to reap rich harvests, and live amidst plenty. Here were the cities of the pre-Vedic *Dasyas*. Here rose the first cities of the *Aryas*. In the plains of the Doab, the Rajahs of Hastinapoor, of Indraprasthra, and of Kanouge, exhibited the highest power and splendour of Hindoo sovereignty. The rich districts watered by the Ganges and Jumna have always tempted the avarice of the foreign conqueror. To these regions did Alexander point as the utmost goal of his ambition. Here was the residence of the most famous Hindoo sages. From this birth-place of arts and civilization has wisdom travelled to the West. The Doab is the battle-ground of the Pandoo against the Kuru—of the Ghiznivide and Ghorian against the Hindoo—of the Mogul against the Patan—of the Mahratta against the Mogul—and of the English against the Mahratta. Nowhere in India is the traveller so much interested as in this valley,—where

cities thirty centuries old turn up in his path,—where many a spot is hallowed by tradition, and many a ruin is consecrated by history,—where abound curious remains of the genius and industry of a world which has long passed away,—where he visits monuments celebrated to the farthest ends of the earth,—and where he treads over battle-fields which have changed the destinies of nations. Its living population, its agricultural prosperity, its seats of manufacture, its busy markets, its ancient wealth and refinement, are also objects of no common attraction and interest.

Baber's 'jungles abounding with elephants' do not occur now-a-days in the immediate neighbourhood of Allahabad. Far from all such, the tract now bears the marks of a high cultivation and populousness. But the mutiny has left on the face of the country traces which the most careless observer cannot fail to discern many years hence. Resembling the lightning, it has left everything charred and burnt in its course. On either hand of the road, nothing but ruin meets the eye in its track. There are whole villages in ruins, without one human being. The walls of mud-huts stand thatchless and rain-beaten. The roads, untrodden by any footsteps, are overgrown with weeds and brambles. Thick bushes hide these villages from the view. There is no stir—no sound of life in them—not even the bayings of a dog to break in upon the silence. The desolate habitations are *be cheragh* at night. By this road had Renaud advanced to open the way towards Cawnpore. He marched his column, fighting as oc-

casion required, and tranquillizing the country by the very simple expedient of burning all the villages in the line of march, and hanging everybody with a black face falling in his way. 'In two days, forty-two men were hanged on the road-side, and a batch of twelve men were executed because their faces were *turned the wrong way*, when they were met on the march.'—The possession of bits of telegraph by an individual in those days 'came under the chapter of capital offences in the Criminal Code, as revised by Colonel Neil.' These 'severities could not have been justified by the Cawnpore massacre, because they took place before that diabolical act.' Half a century of peace and good government had given to these regions a prosperity of which almost every sign has disappeared. The thick and thriving peasantry has become thinned by death and dispersion. No estimate can be formed of the value of property destroyed in that period of anarchy. It would take many years to repair the waste which is visible for many miles in succession. Here and there, the fields covered with crops told of the return of a few families to their plough and pursuits.

Berhampore is a pretty station. The next one is *Futtehpore*. From its very name, its numerous mosques, serais, and tombs, this is at once known to be a Mahomedan town, in which the Patans were very strong, before the arrival of the Moguls. By the aid of a clear moonlight, we could discern, a few steps from the road, the ruins of a large bungalow standing roofless with its bare white skeleton walls, to proclaim the

ravages of the incendiary rebels. The good Bishop, who has been so often quoted in these pages, states, that 'the road for some miles from Futtehpore lies over an open plain, as level as any part of India, and marked out by nature for the scene of a great battle which should decide the fate of the country.' He justly opined, where actually had been fought the battle of Kudjwa, in which, to quote the proverbial saying in Hindoostan—

'*Sujah jeet bazy, apna haat hara.*'
'Sujah having won the game, threw it up with his own hands.'

In our own days, there has been fought the battle which first raised the hopes of a desponding nation, announced to Nana the speedy downfall of his power, and earned to Havelock a niche in the temple of the Indian Clio.

October 28th—Coming with an exaggerated ideal, one is sure to be disappointed by the reality of *Cawnpore*. The station spreads over a considerable space, but much of it is open *maidan* on all sides. True, it is pleasantly situated on the Ganges, high up in Northern India. But the locality is an arid sandy plain, in which the glare, and dust, and the breath of the *loo* (simoom), have always given to it a bad notoriety. Cawnpore has no ancient architectural curiosities, no historic antecedents,—not even a name in the geography of the Hindoos. Baber does not speak of it, nor does the Ayeen Akbary allude to its existence. It is a town of English parentage—dating its origin from the time

when it became a watch-tower to awe down the royal Lucknowite.

Started off on a walk 'to look at Cawnpore.' The busy quarter of trade is a lively scene of activity. Here, lie scattered huge swollen bales of cotton,—there, are piled high pyramids of grain. Here, comes in a vehicle to discharge its goods,—there, goes out another creaking excruciatingly under the weight of its load. The jingling *ekas* pass trotting to and fro all the day long, and the tread of thousands of horses, camels, bullocks, and donkeys loosens every hour from the friable soil a quantity of dust, which rises into the air on the slightest provocation, and floats in suffocating clouds over the station.

The scene changes in the cantonments. The roads here are watered every morning and evening. The long avenues intercepting the sun are pleasing features in a dreary prospect. In no Indian town are the roads so broad, and so well ventilated. The open *maidans* very well answer the purpose of those squares which preserve the health of our metropolis. The tidy shops along the streets are hung with little sign-boards over the doors, or on poles in front of their entrance. In the gala-days of Cawnpore, the cantonments exhibited, mile after mile, a gay and fantastic succession of bungalows, barracks, bazars, and gardens to the river. The river reflected the scene of a floating village, with every description of vessel collected upon its surface. The now bare fields, then stretched with 'regular streets and

squares of canvas.' The promenades were gay with equipages and liveries—'chockful of pretty women!' There were theatricals every week—balls, picnics, and dinners every evening. But those days are numbered 'with the years beyond the flood,'—and a mournful gloom now hangs over the walks and scenes once so animated with life.

Passing along a road towards the river, it was sad to see the desolate houses, some windowless, others roofless, of the late European residents. In the wrecks of gardens and flower-beds, 'roses contended in vain with choking weeds.' Near a dilapidated gateway, a sorry old Hindoostanee, beggared and bereaved by the mutiny, had set up a little brazen idol which was honoured with a pittance by natives to and from their bath in the Ganges along this road.

To *Shah Behari Lal's* Ghaut. The picturesque group of temples, and a broad flight of steps from an elevation of 50 feet above the stream, with which that rich banker of Lucknow had adorned the banks at Cawnpore, are now a most melancholy heap of rubbish—in which, literally, not one stone has been left unturned upon another. The Hindoo temples sheltered the guns which the Gwalior Contingent had brought to play against the bridge of boats, and so Sir Colin thought proper to have them mined and blown up before his second march for Lucknow. The stout massive buildings had made an obstinate resistance to gunpowder. The priests had interceded for the preservation of their shrines. But they were destroyed on account of mili-

tary considerations connected with the safety of the bridge.

The Indian Mutiny may well be compared to one of those storms which, brewed by the Indian sun, is peculiar to the Indian latitudes, and which, rising in a little speck on the north-west, blew a terrific political Norwester. Nowhere had that tempest spent so much of its fury as at Cawnpore. But it was to hope against hope on the part of Nana, to have resuscitated that empire of his forefathers, which, far from being regretted, was contemplated by men with dismay, and recalled to their minds devastated fields, smoking villages, depopulated towns, paralyzed trade, and universal destitution and misery. He tried to play a game in which the redoubted Sevajee himself would have despaired of success. The 'chance, and tumult, and confusion, and discord all embroiled' in the poet's fictitious Pandemonium, found a parallel in the realities of his infernal council. In his panoply of brocades and muslins, it was in him the veriest freak of an Alnaschar to have shaken his fist in the face of doughty Englishmen. He had merely an opportunity to 'strut and fret his hour upon the stage'—there was no sane man who could have believed him to be able to raise a goodly edifice out of chaos.

They showed us the spot, in an open square, south of the canal, on which had been set up the green standard of Islam. There was 'Azeezun, the Demoiselle Theroigne of the revolt, on horseback, dressed in the uniform of her favoured regiment, armed with pistols,

and decorated with medals. There was, too, a priest of high consideration seated beneath the flag, rosary in hand, endeavouring by prayer and meditation to ascertain the propitious hour for an attack upon the stronghold of the infidel.'

But nobody could point to us the whereabouts of the well, into which the unhappy Miss Wheeler had flung herself, to cut short the days of her ignominy and misery. The youngest daughter of Sir Hugh was in her eighteenth year. She was roseate with that bloom, which had still been retained under the pelting of the storm. Loath 'to throw away a pearl richer than all his tribe,' a young Mahomedan trooper had selected her for a prize, and borne her away to his home like 'Pluto carrying off Proserpine.' To revenge the outrages which it is the lot of a woman to suffer under such circumstances, she waited for the dead hour of midnight, when, gently getting up and walking with noiseless steps to where the intoxicated ruffian lay snoring in sleep, she took up the sword lying beside him, and one by one cut off the heads of her captor, his wife, and children. Thus making their end afford some compensation for the loss of her own honour and the murder of her father, she hastened out of the house, and meeting with the first well, precipitated herself into its depths. Many people suspect this to be a trumped-up sensation-story, and believe her to be living quietly in the family of her captor, under a Mahomedan name. But she has not turned up, for all the inquiries made about her,—and we would fain believe her to have put an end to her life,

that had before it the dreary prospect of a life-long ignominy.

There is no forgetting, however, by anybody the *House of the Massacre*. By a strange fatality, this happens to be between the Theatre and the Assembly-Rooms of former days—the house of wail and woe by the side of the houses of laughter and revelry. The building is a small one, said to have formed the humble residence of an Eurasian clerk. To have penned two hundred and six human beings in the compass of this small building was by itself almost another Black-Hole affair. In the centre of the open compound stands the trunk of a withered tree,—the same against which the heads of children had been dashed to pieces, as the story went its round,—and on which afterwards was hung many a scoundrel to pay life for life—the retribution of a maddened Nemesis. Close by is the well into which the bodies of the murdered women and children were thrown. The mouth is now closed, and a cemetery has been raised over it by the hands of those who had been late only by four and twenty hours to have come to the rescue of those unfortunate beings. There is no sadder spot upon the earth than this scene of the most atrocious bloodshed. Death is here associated with all that is darkest in human nature, and darkest in human destiny. By this little cemetery shall the traveller of a distant day stand, to reflect upon those hapless mothers and babies, who fell victims to a massacre the horrors of which even fiction cannot exaggerate, and which is indelible from memory. The falcon darts not at a wren.

The lion springs not upon a lambkin. The infuriated elephant hurts not an infant. Throughout all Nature weakness has a sacred claim upon strength. Never has a plausible motive been wanting to furnish an excuse for the shedding of feminine or infant blood. To propitiate his cause, had Nana vowed to the Indian *Kali* to offer a hecatomb of English ladies and children, the madness of superstition would have been a specious apology in the eyes of mankind. But a wanton and cold-blooded massacre of innocents who could not elude the grasp, is an act the motive for which is an inexplicable problem in psychology,—and an act which blackens the page of Indian history with the deepest stain.*

Took a gharry to drive down to the Intrenchments. To even the most inexperienced eye is apparent their ill-chosen site in the midst of a *maidan* far away from the magazine and the river. The position was not more ill-chosen than ill-fortified, and not more ill-watered than ill-provisioned. To such an extremity had the garrison been reduced for want of provisions, as to have eaten up a bull, a pariah dog, and an aged horse—fabulous food in this nineteenth century, that is read of in the accounts of old shipwrecks. Three years ago, this was the arena of the greatest of all human struggles—a struggle between overwhelming hordes and a heroic few, between mind and material, between civilization and barbarism. The shot-pierced

* 'It is good that the house and the well of horror have been replaced by a fair garden and a graceful shrine.'—*Cawnpore.*

barracks speak of a hotter fire than that of an Indian sun. The low earthworks have been nearly washed away by the autumnal rains. Cawnpore had no history before—its very name now evokes associations enough to fill up a volume.

Next, to the *Suttee-Chowra ghaut*, so called from Suttees formerly burning themselves here. This is a mile to the north-west of the Intrenchments. There was fire above, the burning straw-roofs of the boats: there was the river below: there was death in the front, and destruction in the rear. In the midst of such an infernal scene closed their career many a worthy being, some shot, others sunk, and the rest slaughtered—their bodies left for a carnival to dogs and vultures. Old Ganges had never been so outraged as on that day, when she had to float down corpses of men, women, and children, murdered under the infatuation of emptying England of Englishmen. The village has met its due. But the temple of the Fishermen's god still stands.

Once, in Hindoo antiquity, the Khetryas were a pampered and high-bearing class like the Sepoys. The modern Sepoy Revolt may find a parallel in the ancient Khetrya revolt. But fable disfigures the account of the excesses of Khetrya domination, and the event has no historic lessons for posterity. But the excesses of Pandy rapacity, licentiousness, and cruelty, shall be a warning to the kings and nations of a distant age. Upon Nana is the mark of Cain, and he is doomed to wander from jungle to jungle—now clambering up the rock, and then

toiling through the Himalayan snows—till, at last, sore and weary, famished by hunger, and cursed by retrospection, he shall lay himself down to die, inch by inch, of starvation and disease,—and leave a name for the eternal execration of mankind.

No class of men had found themselves so insnared all of a sudden in the meshes of danger, as the Natives of Bengal, who then happened to be serving or trading in the Upper Provinces. It was the Bengalee who had ushered in the foreigner to the land, and he should suffer now for his crime. Thus proscribed, the out-of-door Bengalees had been at their wits' end how to fly off in a tangent to their homes. Many of them succeeded in skulking away under strange disguises. But those that fell into the hands of Nana's scouts were carried up before him, and made to part with their ears and noses. Of some the right hands were chopped off for the sin of using the English 'gray goose quill.' Though nobody has turned up with a mutilated nose or limb to meet our eyes, yet the story served to echo the opinion, and to give an earnest of the paternal government which men had to expect. Now that things have returned to their old order, many Bengalees are up here again. Turning the tables, they are now seen to give themselves high airs, and to lord it over the crest-fallen and cowed-down Hindoostanees, whom you see to go along the roads like so many knights of the rueful countenance. Those who purposed have mightily succeeded 'to establish a great funk.'

Returned past by the *tête-de-pont* of Sir Colin. The

earthworks, still under garrison, are just at the head of the bridge-of-boats that leads one to the dominions of ancient Rama.

There is the Ganges—the *Bhagirathi-Ganga*, and there is the Ganges-Canal—the *Cautley-Ganga* of the natives. The excavation of the canal is deep enough, but from men bathing in it, the water did not appear to be more than waist-high. In one or two places up from Cawnpore, the canal has been brought by aqueducts over bridges, under which the Ganges pursues its course—an engineering skill which appears very extraordinary in native eyes. The canal is some 400 miles long, but so great is the travelling speed of its water, that even at Cawnpore it retains an icy coldness—coming as it does from the eternal snows and glaciers of the Himalayas. The banks here are built up of masonry steps in the fashion of a ghaut. Three locks successively break the velocity of the headlong stream, and the chafing waters forcing through narrow interstices are heard like distant waterfalls. There is a Ganges-Canal Navigation Company set on foot, and we saw some of their flat-bottomed vessels to ply up and down the canal. This gigantic work, undertaken to make famines impossible, is said to be becoming dearer every day the more it costs and the less it yields. By Nana's fiat, the famous Ganges-Canal had been given away as a perquisite to his favourite Azeemollah—his ex-khitmutgar minister.

Little or nothing to see in the native quarters—no ancient houses, no ancient families, no ancient wealth,

no ancient toles, and no ancient temples: all here have grown within the memory of living man. The only thing that struck us as ancient is the dingy crowded mode of habitation with narrow tortuous paths—unchanged by thirty centuries; unchangeable, perhaps, by thirty more.

Back to the lodgings, quite knocked up, and hot, and hungry. Gave a lusty call for the *hooka*. Then rushed to the waters to bring our temperature down to 90° Fahrenheit. Next sat to a breakfast of steaming-kecchery, chappaties, hill-potatoes, chutnees, and sweet-meats, quite in the good old style of the Hindoostanees—who despite their vegetarianism, make as good soldiers as those who choose their food by their canine teeth. In the party, there was a friend who had been introduced to us as banian to a respectable European solicitor. He gave us the story of a very extraordinary adventure. No sooner had Cawnpore been retaken, and the country about it had got quiet, and the papers teemed with accounts of *loot*, than his master began to dream dreams, and see visions of diamonds, rubies, and pearls, bricked up in the walls and buried underneath the floors of the Nana's palace at Bithoor. They grew serious, and he got the permission of Government to try his speculation. Coming to Bithoor with his banian, he at once set himself to open the walls and dig the floors. No diamonds or rubies made their appearance. The female apartments might contain them. They were tried, but with no better result. Perhaps they were hid in the out-houses. Down went their walls and

roofs, and still no diamonds. Unquestionably, they were lodged in the compounds and fields to lull all suspicion. Twenty acres were carefully ploughed and spaded as if for a crop of peas, till at last the 'nothing-venture-nothing-have' solicitor stood aghast at 2000 rupees gone. Unfortunately, this took place not in the days of the 'Limiteds.' The banian has got nothing but to tell his story. Indeed, he made the weeping philosopher stand aloof, and the laughing one to carry the day.

The past of Cawnpore is made up of military parades and fêtes, of dinners to Governors-General, and of balls to high official dames. The present forms a sad tale of sack, massacre, and desolation. But the future of it glows in the imagination as a thriving seat of trade and manufactures. Cawnpore is noted for the excellence and cheapness of all articles made from leather—saddlery, harness, boots and shoes, bottle-covers, and cheroot-cases. The manufacture was introduced by a colony of Chinese, who settled in the bazar many years ago. There were then three hundred shops engaged in the trade. The cattle slaughtered for the meat of four or five regiments of European troops, generally quartered here, not only gave an impetus to the trade, but also furnished a large portion of those hides which fetched the highest value in Calcutta. Lace-making and laced skull-caps were now almost the only manufactures that we saw in a few of the shops. The nucleus of the Native town is at present of a small size. Scarcely is there a warehouse now, and goods are piled

on the open greens. But before many years, when agricultural produce shall pour hither by rail, river, and road—from a large part of the surrounding country, and from the rich districts of Oude and Rohilcund—for transit to the port of shipping, a succession of warehouses and sheds will extend to the Railway station. By the speculative Up-country wallahs, the place may be raised to the importance of the first cotton market in Hindoostan; and in time, Hindoostanee enterprise, calculating on the profits of reviving the defunct manufactures of their country, may emulate Manchester, and start projects for turning Cawnpore into a rival town. The cessation of its military importance would then be more than compensated by the enhancement of its commercial importance.

The *ekas* are the only public coaches that are available to strangers at Cawnpore. In a short ramble through the Native town, the only idol seen by us was the image of a Doorga, set up by a Bengalee Baboo, who came here on service and at last settled with his family. Comparatively, the Hindoostanee is less idolatrous than the Bengalee. The former believes in Shiva, but does not encourage the barbarities of the *Churuck Pooja*. He believes in Doorga, but does not worship her idol as a three-days' wonder, and then consign it to the river. He has gods and goddesses worshipped only in the public temples. He has rarely a domestic *Salgaram* or statue of Krishna. His religious festivals are seldom tainted with idolatrous processions. Bengal, long influenced by Buddhism, has lapsed into Brah-

minism with a vengeance. The Bengalee Baboo carries idolatry wherever he goes. Alexander left cities to mark the track of his conquests. The Bengalee Baboo leaves idols to mark the track of his peregrination. It is English enterprise to set up schools and found hospitals. It is Bengalee enterprise to erect temples and put up idols. The Englishman teaches the Bengalee to bridge rivers and open railroads. The Bengalee teaches hook-swinging to the Santhal, and idol-making to the Hindoostanee. The Baboo who has set up the image of Doorga at Cawnpore is said to have brought artisans from Calcutta, because in Hindoostan they knew not how to make an idol riding upon a lion with ten arms.

October 29th.—Left for Agra by Lallah Joteeprosaud's dawk. It was one of his brethren, Lallah Tantimul, who first started the project of an Inland Transit Company. Immediately out of Cawnpore, the suburbs are ravined. But soon the country assumes a level surface, and fields succeed to fields spreading an uninterrupted sheet of cultivation. The tall stalks of the *jowara*, with their tufted crests, appear to stand like close-arrayed regiments. Groves of mangoes at intervals make the landscape highly picturesque. But the dusty road is a positive nuisance. Dawking also soon turns out to be a sore method of locomotion. The horse at the third stage was a most stubborn animal. He was brought out and harnessed, but an attempt to start him made him rear violently, and to stand straight on his hind legs. Our companions had a better luck, and scampered off past by us, hallooing and hurrahing

in a John Gilpin style,—while, left at a dead stand, we had to cry out for the Mazeppa of Byron.

The Doab, like Bengal, is flat and alluvial. The vast plain is uninterrupted by a single eminence;* but the soil and climate differ in the same degree as does a Hindoostanee from a Bengalee. The Doab has not the matchless fertility of that 'vast expanse of emerald meadow,' which is saturated with the moisture of the Bay of Bengal. The cocoa and palmyra thrive not in a nitrous soil. But the tract which derives its fruitfulness from the copious streams of the Ganges and Jumna, ranks next in the luxuriance of its vegetation and the greenness of its landscapes. The signs of a better climate are visible in the tall and robust figure, the firm step, the stern eye, and the erect bearing of the manly Hindoostanee. There are seldom the mists and rains, which, brought up by a soft southern wind from a boundless ocean, make Bengal a pestilential swamp, exhaling frightful diseases, and stinting the growth of its men and cattle. The sharp west wind of Upper India rapidly dries up the soil, to improve the quality of its grain, vegetables, and fruitery. Rarely is a taint left on the air to carry off men by periodic epidemics. The effect of more nutritive food and climatic salubrity, is not more manifested in the greater physical development than in the superior intellectual stamina of the Hindoostanees. In Bengal, because nature does so

* 'The hill of Prabasha, near ancient Kausambi, on the Jumna, about thirty miles above Allahabad, is the only rock on the Doab of the Ganges and Jumna.'—*Cunningham*

much, the lazy people will do nothing. Here, hardihood must toil for bread. The insufficiency of rainfall has to be made up by artificial irrigation. No tanks—in their place the country is scattered with a frequency of wells, tapped to the depth of fifty to eighty feet. Each field has its own well—and down an inclined bank of earth, the husbandman drives his team, drawing up water in a huge leathern bag to irrigate his crops. The villages are built in open tracts, with scarcely any vegetation about them. This is in marked contrast with the sylvan villages of Bengal. It is to be ascertained, which of them has the greater advantage in point of sanitation. The huts are all mud-walled and mud-terraced. They are decidedly inferior in appearance to an Arcadian cottage of Bengal, which, says Elphinstone, 'with its trim curved thatched roof and cane walls, is the best looking in India.'

Chowbeypore is picturesquely situated—it has a fine masonry well by the road-side. In this petty village had been stationed a squadron of Native cavalry. On the afternoon of the 9th June, 1857, the officers in command had sat down over their luncheon. The sound of a bugle interrupted their repast, and gave them the alarm. Flinging themselves on horseback, they rode for dear life. But the captain was shot down in his saddle, and cut in pieces where he lay. Two subalterns had taken to the water like hunted stags, and there miserably perished. Two others had sought refuge in a neighbouring village, but had been driven back to fall into the hands of their pursuers. One lieutenant alone,

by dint of hard riding, escaped to Cawnpore with a bullet-hole in his cheek.

Mera-ka-serai is the charitable institution of a Mahomedan. It is an elegant and commodious caravanserai for the accommodation of merchants and travellers. The buildings enclose a spacious square, planted here and there with trees to spread their shade. In the middle of the square is a large masonry-built well, with excellent water. Both Hindoos and Mahomedans halt at this serai. In one room does the Kanougian Brahmin cook his meal of *dall* and *chuppatee*,—in the other does the Mussulman boil his *onion-kechree*. The fierce noonday-heat, the toil and fatigue of journey, for a while make them forget their mutual antipathies. Hunger and thirst have no caste.

Three miles north of Mera-ka-serai, and across some indigo fields, lie the ruins of *Kanouge*—the once mighty city 'of thirty miles circumvallation, of thirty thousand betel-shops, and of sixty thousand public dancers and singers.' The steps of the traveller are naturally turned to a scene, of which such romantic accounts have been left both by Hindoo and Mahomedan writers. But he has to tread only upon prostrate walls and broken gateways, and contemplate a blank of shapeless ruins. Year after year, for six long centuries, have the solstitial rains of an Indian autumn washed away the vestiges; or the dust-storms of Upper India, rolling over the spot, have embedded them beneath an accumulated soil. The towers and palaces of the proud Rahtores have been laid low for many a century. The ancient population has

long disappeared. Upon the spot there linger only a few thousand Brahmins, weavers, artisans, and peasants, —in the same manner that 'Arabs hut or encamp upon the ruins of Palmyra and Balbec.' The appearance of Kanouge is exceedingly desolate—it stands 'childless and crownless in a voiceless woe.'

Of Kanouge—the Kanya-kubja of Puranic geography—the earliest mention is found in Menu, as identified with Punchala. The limits of its kingdom as assigned in the Mahabarat nearly agree with those assigned in the 'Rajasthan.' It was an important city in the age of Buddha, who had preached here a lecture on the instability of human existence. To commemorate this event, Asoca had built a *stupa* or mound 200 feet high. It is then noticed by Ptolemy in his Geography. Fa Hian and Hwen Thsang next visited it—the one in the beginning of the fifth, the other in the middle of the seventh century. Though in Hwen Thsang's time there reigned a Rajah by the name of Harsha Vardhana, ruling from Cashmere to Assam, and from Nepal to the Nerbudda, the city had not then been of a larger size than three half-miles in length, and three-quarters of a mile in breadth. It was surrounded by strong walls and deep ditches, and washed by the Ganges along its eastern face. Two hundred and fifty years later, Kanouge is spoken as 'a great city' by Abu Zaid. In A.D. 915, the well-known geographer Masudi speaks of it as 'the capital of one of the four great kings of India.' Just a century afterwards, the historian of Mahmood relates that 'he there saw a city which raised its head

to the skies, and which in strength and structure might justly boast to have no equal. In another hundred and seventy-five years, it attained a still greater splendour and opulence, and became that overgrown city of a luxurious and effeminate people, which fell an easy prey to the Ghorian—when with the fall of Kanouge ended Hindoo independence. The last scion of the Rahtores departed to found a new kingdom far away in Marwar, —and deserted Kanouge, as described by Ebn Batuta, only a hundred and fifty years later, had dwindled itself to a 'small town.'

Up to the middle of the seventh century, Kanouge was more a Buddhistical than a Brahminical city. The Rajah of the land was a Buddhist, and had intimidated the King of Cashmere into surrendering the tooth of Buddha. There were three great monasteries to the south of the town, in one of which was a *Vihara*, or chapel, wherein 'this tooth had been preserved in a casket adorned with precious stones raised on a high pedestal. It was shown daily to crowds of people, although the tax charged for its exhibition was a *large piece of gold.* Perfumes were burned before it by thousands of votaries, and the flowers which were strewn in profusion over it were devoutly believed never to conceal the casket.' The probable site of the monasteries and the *Vihara* is supposed to be the large mound towards the south-east of the town, in what is now called the *mahalla* of Lala Misr Tola.*

There were many other monasteries and chapels

* 'Archæological Report.'—*Cunningham.*

with stone foundations, but walls of brick,—one of which, 200 feet high, was dedicated to a statue of Buddha 30 feet in height. In another were his hair and nails. Just in the same manner that the remains of Buddha had furnished sacred relics to his followers in ancient India, had the bones of the *saints* been carried all over Christendom for the edification of the pious. Human nature is alike in all ages and countries, and 'we cannot so inoculate our old stock, but we shall relish of it.'

Only two Brahminical temples are spoken of by Hwen Thsang that were dedicated to Shiva. They were of the same form and size as the Viharas of Buddha, and built of blue stone highly polished, and adorned with excellent sculptures. The Brahmins now cannot find the money to build such magnificent temples, and they have degenerated in architectural skill. The fact of only two Brahminical temples, shows the great minority in which the Brahmins yet stood in the middle of the seventh century. But Puranic idolatry was slowly making its way, and gaining a foothold in all the principal cities of the land.

Of the remains of Kanouge, the most prominent is the triangular-shaped citadel, which occupies the highest ground in the midst of a scorched plain. It makes a large and lofty mound, raising its head in defiance of time, war, flood, and fire, nearly 50 feet in height from the level of the ground. The three faces have been measured, each about 4000 feet long. The situation has been remarked to be 'a commanding one,

—and before the use of cannon the height alone must have made Kanouge a strong and important position.' In all its entirety, it could not have failed to appear in the eyes of Mahmood as raising its head to the skies.

The *Rang-Mahal*—in the south-west angle of the fort—had been the ancient Hindoo palace. It is strengthened in front by four towers. The brick wall faced with blocks of *kunkur* is seven feet thick on the top, and 40 feet high, above the level of the bazar. There is the first outer wall, and then there is a second, a third, and a fourth inner wall: the distances between each may fairly give us an idea of the breadth of a room in an ancient Hindoo palace. As far as it can be traced, the palace seems to have covered 'an area 240 feet in length by 180 feet in breadth.' It is said to have been built by Ajoy Pal—probably the same who had been come upon all of a sudden by Mahmood, and who in 1021 had been defeated and killed by a great confederate Hindoo army under the leadership of the Rajah of Callinger. Imagination conjures up here the brilliant scene of Jychand's *Rajshye*—the last that India has witnessed of that august Hindoo ceremony. In the wicket, which still remains, and appears to have formed a side entrance to the court-yard of the palace, might be fancied to have been placed the effigies in gold of Samarsi and Pirthi-raj acting as a porter and scullion,—those heroic chiefs who had disdained to sanction by their presence the audacious proceedings of their rival. There had been gathered here almost all the crowned heads of India; and from the

midst of this assembled royalty, did Pirthi-raj carry off in open day the daughter of his antagonist—the beautiful Sunjogta, the Indian Helen of her age. It was just outside the south-east buttress of Rang Mahl, that twenty-nine golden ingots were discovered in 1834, each weighing eighteen seers and three-quarters.

In the *Jummah Musjeed* of Kanouge, built on the site and with the materials of a Brahminical temple, may be seen a specimen of the ancient Hindoo cloisters. There is another mosque to the south-east of the citadel, and overlooking the ancient deserted bed of the Ganges, in which the pillars are also Hindoo. Near this mosque had stood a broken image of Shusti, the goddess of fecundity, and a pedestal bearing date A.D. 1136. This great curiosity for Hindoo mothers has disappeared by the wanton zeal of a Mahomedan *Tehsildar*, who should not have any more meddled with Hindoo relics and idols, when his nation had ceased to be the rulers of the land, and to whom may be repeated Newton's well-known saying, 'Ah, Diamond, you little know the mischief thou hast done.' All Mahomedans should know that the days of idol-breaking have been succeeded by the days of idol-seeking for the illustration of Hindoo history.

There are two statues to be seen at *Sing Bhawani*—of Rama and Luchmun, as they are called by the people. Their eight arms of each, however, contradict the popular supposition. Outside the building, there are figures of Doorga slaying the Mahesasoor, and of Shiva and Parvati on the bull Nandi. These specimens serve to

show the full development of Puranic idolatry, and the total extinction of all Buddhism in Kanouge by the twelfth century.

From the sites of the existing ruins, and also the chief *find-spots* of coins and relics, may be determined the probable extent of ancient *bonâ-fide* Kanouge. The 'thirty miles circumvallation' seems to be an exaggeration of the Hindoo writers. The 'thirty-thousand betel-leaf shops' is also very suspicious. The *betel* has certainly been a great favourite of our nation, as a digestive aperient, from days beyond the age of Menu. By the women it is liked, because it gives to them the 'balmy breath' of Desdemona. But in Calcutta, at the present day, there would hardly be five hundred betel-leaf shops.* Taking Kanouge to have been six times larger than Calcutta, the proportion would not give to it more than three thousand shops. The betel again grows scantily in Upper India, and sells at half-a-dozen leaves per pice, or six times dearer than in Calcutta. Though the Hindoostanees are the most famous betel-leaf chewers under the sun, still the statement of thirty thousand shops, or thousand shops to a mile, is to be taken with considerable abatement. As to 'the sixty thousand families of public dancers and singers,' if it had really been the case then, taking each family to have consisted of four members, near two hundred and fifty thousand men and women, or about half the population of ancient Kanouge, must have fiddled away their time,—and it is

* The Justices of the Peace ought to publish the statistics which the 'Licensing Act' has enabled them to possess.

no wonder that their city should have fallen, whilst they may have been engaged in screwing tight the pegs of their tambourines.

Buddhist Kanouge had at last grown to be so highly Brahminical and orthodox, that five Brahmins had been imported from it by Adisura to improve the degenerate stock in Bengal. Of their breeding are our high-caste *Banerjees* and *Chatterjees*. The five Brahmins had been accompanied by five Sudra servants, who are the progenitors of our worthy *Ghoses* and *Boses*.* How much is it deplored now, that the Sena Rajah did not send for five pairs of Hurriana bulls and heifers to improve the cattle of Bengal,—rather than have planted the social *upas* of Koolinism, which keeps a Brahmin lady in *misshood* till her gray hairs, and which sanctions the marriage of a girl with a dying octogenarian at the funeral ghaut.

Until this day we had not been aware of there being any fish-eaters amongst the granivorous Hindoostanees,

* Our *Ghoses* and *Boses* are not more *Dosa-branded* than our Sudra women are *Dossee-branded*. It is right that Young Bengal Kayusts have dropped the affix of a Sudra origin from their names. In the same way should the disgraceful affix be taken off from the names of our Sudra females. The Brahmin women now are no more *goddesses* than the Kayust and Bunniah women are *slave-girls*. Your Shamasoondry *Dossee* is a millionnaire lady,—your Kaminee *Dabee* (to speak not in an unkindly spirit, but for argument's sake) is a cook-maid in a Sudra household. How outrageous it is that Shamasoondry should inscribe her name as a *Dossee* or slave-girl on a Government Security for 5 lacs, or on lawsuit papers in a case at the High Court for a Zemindary of 50,000 rupees income! The British Indian Association should make a move in the matter—and Pundit Eshwara Chunder Biddyasagur should come forward as a Brahmin to take off the slur that Brahmins have cast on the names of our Sudra females. The Hindoostanee Sudra women have no such disgraceful affix to their names.

and that again in orthodox Kanouge. The fact was imparted to us by a respectable *Misr* Brahmin, who told us that his brotherhood at Kanouge make no objection to eat fish at their meals.

Traced back our way from Kanouge, and proceeded as fast as possible on our journey. Mango topes after mango topes—they dot almost the whole face of the Doab. By the side of every tope is a well. The well and the tope are married, as in Bengal they solemnize hymeneals between a *banyan* and an *asut* tree. These rural picnics are celebrated with great pomp and rejoicings. The proprietor who is capable, feasts the whole village near which the tope is planted. The well is regarded as the husband, because its waters nourish the plantation. In India, the custom of planting trees and digging wells is very ancient. Menu has instructions about them. That which seems to have arisen from sanatory considerations, is now followed as a religious duty. They make wells and plant topes, not for any worldly profit, but for the benefit of their souls in the next world: 'the names of the great men who built the castles, palaces, and tombs at Delhi and Agra have been almost forgotten, because no one derives any advantage from them; but the names of those who planted the mango-groves are still remembered and blessed by all who eat of their fruit, sit in their shade, and drink of their water, from whatever part of the world they come.'

Our route now lay through a country which possessed little interest, and was perfectly level in its

character. Passed by several unknown and uninteresting villages. The principal objects on the way were long trains of waggons, fifty or sixty together, drawn by oxen, and carrying merchandise. The up-country carts are as superior as are its oxen. The weight taken by a cart is over sixty maunds, or three times more than the weight taken in Calcutta. The carts are drawn by three bullocks—one being placed in front of the other two. There is a fourth which follows behind, as a reserve, to act in contingencies. The mild-eyed animals have little bells suspended on their necks, and raise a pleasing sound as they move on at a jog-trot pace. The goods are protected by a framework from dropping on to the ground. The waggoners have among them spare wheels, and hammers, and tools, and everything necessary for a journey of several hundred miles. They encamp at night in caravan style, and sleep on the top of their goods. These superior vehicles ought to supersede the miserable cartage in the streets of Calcutta, and economize the trade-charges of its merchants. The number of carts met proceeding along the road was endless. Now a string of them extended for half a mile —then a knot of some twenty or thirty of them nearly blocked up the passage. The carts were principally laden with grain, and thickened at every stage of our progress. From their constant processions the road has suffered great wear and tear. In many places it has become level with the fields. The earth on the surface has been turned into knee-deep dust, and bullocks wading through it raised thick volumes obscuring the

sun, and suffocating the traveller. The clouds of dust in the distance always gave us timely notice to let down the curtains and raise the glasses of our gharry. Occasionally, there passed also long lines of camels led by the nose; and herds of donkeys trudging under loaded sacks of corn, fuel-wood, or metalling-stones. To all appearance, this life and bustle betokened a great traffic along the thoroughfare. But the stir seemed to be of an unusual character. There was a meaning in the portentous hot haste to transport grain from one district to another. The annual rain-fall has failed, and there has not fallen a drop in the last forty days. The drought has parched up the earth. The fields have got embrowned. The wells have fallen sixty to seventy feet deep. The crop on the ground has lost the green of its verdure. The price of food-staples has risen nearly fifty per cent., and the prognostications of an inevitable famine are in everybody's mouth. Hence the Brinjarees are taking care to provide against the day of need and distress, by housing and laying in stores of corn.

The husbandman is a little meteorologist. He is weather-wise enough to make his predictions with a near certainty. The evil, however, may yet be averted by a timely good shower. The rural population therefore look up with wistful eyes to the sky, for the coming on of a 'cloud-messenger' of plenty. But nowhere in the heavens is a speck to be seen. The wind holds up its breath, and stirs not a leaf. The day has a dull clouded lustre, and keeps down the heat. The nights are cool. There is in the temperature that steady and

equable character which least of all promises a change. They fail not to understand these as premonitory symptoms foreshadowing the event that in a few months hence is to turn these fair regions, now so crowded with a healthful and industrious population, into a valley of misery, disease, and death.

From the Ganges at Cawnpore to the Jumma at Agra, the distance is nearly two hundred miles. All this long tract is unwatered by a single natural stream. The Ganges-Canal running through it debouches in two branches, one to the Jumma, and the other to the Ganges. But artificial irrigation in a season of drought answers little better than slaking the unquenchable thirst of a man in high fever. Ten thousand wells and canals are not equal to one good shower of heaven. The provinces of Upper India are as remarkable for their fertility and high state of cultivation, as for their being subject to periodic visitations of famine. Frequent allusions to dearths and afflictions of scarcity are met with in Menu. His justification of Ajigurtha is a proof that parents sold their children in distress even then. Famines have recurred periodically from age to age, and still mankind is as ignorant of their cause as three thousand years ago. The fiend mocks at the impotence of humanity, and laughs over his prey with a 'hyena-laughter.' Not till the secrets of meteorology are revealed to man, must he bow down his head to the infliction of that terrible scourge. There are laws as much to regulate the rains, as to regulate the droughts; and the day is surely destined to dawn, when the recur-

rence of storms and droughts will be calculated with the same precision as the recurrence of eclipses and the return of comets.

A hurricane wrecking a fleet of ships on the sea, and a cyclone uprooting houses and plantations upon the land—a conflagration reducing towns to ashes, and an inundation washing away whole villages—a battle-field of the wounded and slain, and an hospital of the diseased and dying,—are no doubt the most awful amongst the scenes and sights of human misery. But they are misfortunes local and temporary in their character. Far otherwise is the calamity which overtakes mankind under the name of famine. The sight of a famine-stricken land is the most frightful and heart-rending of all earthly spectacles. The famine desolates tracts hundreds of miles in extent. The famine numbers its victims by hundreds and thousands. It spares few living objects. The insects die for having nothing to feed on. The fishes become extinct in the shrunken rivers. The cattle die off in vast numbers, paralyzing labour for many a day to come. In the households of men, ornaments, utensils, and the very doors and windows of their houses are sold to buy grain, and dole it in mouthfuls to the members. There is then left nothing more to eat on the morrow. Fruits, roots, have been all consumed,—and at last the barks of trees are stripped to appease the gnawings of hunger. Now does the husband abandon the wife, the wife the husband,—and parents sell their children. All cares, all affections, and all hopes are forgotten; food, food alone is

the object. Famished, and demoralized, and maddened, and brutalized, the population at last arrives at the desperate extremity of 'competing with the birds for the half-digested grains of corn found amid the soil of the road.' Then do men cast cannibal looks, and fall foul of each other. In the train of famine, comes pestilence to bring up the rear of human miseries. Diseases, which strange and unwholesome food engenders, make their appearance,—and the gaunt skeletons of bone and skin, no longer able to keep their legs, drop on the road and are devoured alive by dogs, who have acquired an unnatural ferocity from feeding on human bodies. In all directions, lie scattered the dead; and where they lie, they rot and their bones bleach—it being impossible for their feeble survivors to do them the funeral rites. The districts thus depopulated do not recover for a series of years—sometimes never at all. Happily, the present age is one of extended commerce, of rapid communication and transit, of a beneficent Government, and of an enlightened generation, all of which it is hoped shall be able to combat with the evil, and mitigate its afflictions.*

All along the land is yet strewn with the wrecks of the late political storm. Here a dismantled building—there a burnt-down bungalow with its bare white walls against the sky. Passed by a village which has turned almost into a desert. The mud roofs of the houses have fallen in, and the mud walls are overgrown with

* This alludes to the famine of 1861 in the North-West, and was written whilst that of 1866 was raging in Bengal.

vegetation—their owners having fled the country to escape the halter. In front of the village were some old ricks of straw, and stacks of fuel-wood, and a knot of rotting idle carts, without anybody, perhaps, to own them. This is the picture of but a solitary village or two at intervals. In general, however, the country has settled down to a complete tranquillity. The cultivator is busily engaged in the fields. The shepherd tends his browsing cattle. The carpenters and blacksmiths are at their work again. The victuallers have opened their shops along the road. The dealers have exposed their wares and goods for sale. The merchants are transporting bales in the public bullock-trains. In fact, confidence has returned to all classes to resume their business of life.

Nothing to see but *jowara* fields and mango topes without end. Originally, the mango tree did not grow in India. It flourished in Ravana's garden in Ceylon. On the conquest of that island, the monkey-general Hunuman had been attracted to the fair orchards, and gorging himself with the fruit so delicious to the taste, had chosen to throw away the empty kernels across the sea, which took root and were first acclimatized in the soil of India Proper. The fruit of his exploit lives to this day, and it is not without reason that the Tamul general of Rama is counted as one of the six *immortals* of our nation. In the ninth century, the people of Orissa were called Huns.* Is the name of Hunuman

* This is mentioned in the inscriptions in the Monghyr copper tablet, and also on the broken column of Sarun.—*Asiatic Researches*, vol. ix.

from the Huns, or from monkey-conditioned and monkey-mannered foresters?—a query to philologists and antiquarians.

Halted at a magnificent tope. Many others had done the same to rest a while from the broiling sun. The crew gathered was very motley,—and the ground was covered with *chulas* or cooking-places, some of which were being lighted, while others had been already lit, and had either the earthen pot or brass lotah of rice boiling over them. The poor wretch who could not afford to have two meals a day, had yet to wait for sunset, and was now chewing only a handful or two of *chenna* or fried gram with a bit of salt. The better-off bunneah was there, kneading the dough with all the force of his arms. The high-caste Brahmin had a few paces off marked his *chowka*, or the untrespassable lines of his sacred cooking-place, and was munching away his cake of wheat-flour dipped in dal-porridge. The hungry chap who had dropped in first of all was measuring his length upon the earth, and enjoying his *siesta* with his head upon the baggage for safe custody. There happened to have halted, also, a Hindoo convert with his family and children. They were travelling in two bullock carts of the country, with little matting sheds to protect them from sun and wind. They carried with them their own commissariat, and baskets of poultry, and 'odds and ends useful on a journey.' The middle-aged, portly man—the father already of some ten boys and daughters—was out with his musket to look after a pigeon or partridge, while his dinner was being cooked

under the superintendence of his nut-brown lady. Though by no means in well-off circumstances, he and his family did not fail to make a marked contrast in their white and decent clothing from the rest of the squalid and poorly clad company. The man was a Catechist, and was moving down to a new district to take charge of his flock.

But apart from all company sat a woman, slightly reclining against her baggage, and keeping her eye upon a little boy that was playing before her, and eating at turns from a scrip spread out for his repast. She had a fine cut of face, and a well-developed Grecian form for a sculptor's model. She lives in Delhi, whence she is travelling down the country to a distant relation. Since morning, she had been walking ten miles with her animate and inanimate burden on her body. Her pensive countenance betokened a sadness preying upon her heart. She had a husband serving as a grazier in the ranks of the late Sepoy army. The poor man fell in the mutiny, leaving no one to look after his wife and child. They have now no home in which to lay their heads—no resource to live upon but beggary. How many such there are, whom the recent mutiny has made homeless and penniless! and how many more such there will shortly be, whom the famine shall make restless vagrants in search of food they cannot find!

On the way, it had been a novel sight for us to see a genteel young Hindoostanee lady travel riding astride on horseback, while her husband walked on foot alongside the animal. Her face was hid by a veil, from be-

neath which she gratified her womanly curiosity by a peep, at times, with her dark lustrous eyes upon the passengers. She had been left behind us far in the rear to travel slowly on her tat. But she, too, happened to come in, and alight at the grove for a short respite in her journey. The reader may think we are always harping on woman. But it is difficult to regard her, like Hamlet, as mere 'quintessence of dust.'

'Blood, pulse, and breast, confirm the Dardan shepherd's prize.'

Near *Bhowgaon*, the main road goes towards Delhi, and another road branches off towards Agra. Reached *Mynporee*—long the seat of a Hindoo Rajah descended from the house of Pirthi-raj. The ancient Hindoo fortress still overlooks the valley of the Esan—now a dried-up stream. In Mynporee, the population is chiefly Rajpoot. The female infanticide prevalent here for many generations has been suppressed. Mynporee was one of the hottest of mutiny tracts. But the town has settled down to its quiet pursuits, and exhibits the usual calm after a storm.

October 30th.—Daybreak at *Shecoabad*. The name of the place, the bake-houses, the meat-shops, the fowls domesticated in the dwelling-houses, the heaps of onions laid out for sale, the circumcised children playing naked in the streets, the Mussulmans with their shaven skull-capped heads, and the Mussulmanees with their voluptuous airs but bit-of-a-ferocious physiognomies, all indicated this to be a Mahomedan town. But everything Mahomedan is now seen in a stage of decay. From a

large, populous, and respectable town, Shecoabad has declined into a poor and squalid village. None of the inhabitants appeared to be in a well-to-do condition. The numerous ruins of old buildings and tanks are proofs of a prosperous state which no longer meets the eye. Shecoabad is still regarded as the farthest town in which the polished Oordoo of the quondam Mogul Court of Agra is to this day spoken without any taint of rural corruption. The bazar here is well supplied with all sorts of provisions that a traveller can expect on the way. *Singharas* or water-chestnuts (*Trapa bispinosa*) are very large and abundant here—and those fresh from the pond delicious. They form in these provinces a regular vegetation, covering all the tanks with their plantation. The kernels are sun-dried, and carried often to distant markets to sell like wheat or barley for food.

As we proceeded everything about us bespoke of Hindoostan—the stalwart and muscular men, their turbaned heads and tucked-up *dhooties*, their Hindi colloquy, the garment-wearing women, the mud-roofed houses, the fields of *jowara*, the dry soil and air, the superior cattle, the camels, the absence of the bamboo and cocoa, and the wells in place of tanks. In seaboard Bengal, bogs, fens, and forests cover nearly a third of its area. In the Doab almost every inch of land is under the plough. From Allahabad to Shecoabad there are four large cities, and villages at frequent intervals. A similar distance in Bengal is no doubt dotted with the same number of villages, but not one

town equal to Futtehpore, Cawnpore, or Mynporee. There townships, deserving of the name, occur only along the banks of the Bhagiruttee. If villages in the Doab are less picturesque, they are at the same time less subject to epidemics than the woody villages of Bengal. In a Bengal village hardly any better food is generally procurable than coarse rice, and lentils, and *goor*. In the rural districts of the Doab, flour, vegetables, fruits, milk, and sweetmeats are as abundant and excellent as in a metropolis. The food of a people is the best criterion of its condition. Here the rural population is more intelligent and spirited than the same class in Bengal. The ryot in Hindoostan is no less a bondsman to the *mahajun* than the ryot in Jessore or Dacca; but he is more independent-minded, and would not tamely put up with the outrages that are inflicted by a Bengal Zemindar or Indigo-planter. Unquestionably, the humblest Doabee lives upon better food, and covers his body with more abundant clothing, than the humblest Bengalee. The cattle here are various. Camels, buffaloes, horses, donkeys, and oxen are all made to assist man in his labours. In Bengal the oxen alone form beasts of burden. The fashion of Hindoostanee coolieism is to take the load over the waist, and not upon the head. In Calcutta, the Baboos who talk big of politics and reformations, do not know what it is to ride. In Hindoostan, rural women perform journeys on horseback,—and princesses discuss the merits of horsemanship. The fondness of the Doabee women for coloured millinery certainly evinces a more refined

female taste, and to them may remotely be traced the impetus which is given to the various dye-manufactures of our country. The agricultural women of the Doab use ornaments of brass and bell-metal. The same class in Bengal is in the habit of wearing shell-ornaments—ornaments that first came into fashion with the savages, though sometimes a pair of Dacca shell-bracelets may cost the sum of two hundred and fifty rupees.

One particular ornament in general use amongst the Doabee women, of both the upper and lower classes, is the *teeka*, which is in the shape of a tiny crescent made of gold, silver, or tinsel, according as the female is circumstanced. It is stuck with an adhesive substance on the forehead, just between the eyebrows. The smooth white expanse of a female forehead—with the profile of the dark curls of hair, and the pair of lustrous orbs shedding their soft effulgence,—forms the highest attraction in the beauty of a woman. But Hindoostanee taste mars the effect of that beauty by placing the *teeka*, like an imitated moon, in the broad heaven of a woman's face. These *teekas* are not a little prized and coveted by the Hindoostanee sparks. They train *bulbuls* to execute little commissions of gallantry. On a given signal, the bird goes, seizes, and carries off the *teeka* from the forehead of a woman, as precious booty, to her pining lover.

In the days that Bishop Heber travelled through the Doab, he saw the very common people going to market carrying swords and shields, spears, or matchlock guns. There was a time when agriculturists were

obliged to follow the plough with their swords by their sides, and their friends around them with their matchlocks in hand, and matches lighted.'* The nation was then one of lawless and violent habits, and no man was sure that he might not at any moment be called upon to fight for his life and property. This state of things, consequent on the anarchy which succeeded the effetism of the Mogul power, had ushered into existence various denominations of banditti. For a series of years, the thoroughfares of the Doab were haunted by brigands plundering and murdering in the broad daylight. It was on the discovery of thirty dead bodies in different wells of the Doab, that Thuggeeism first came to the knowledge of the Calcutta Council in 1810. But in fifty years the police has been so much reformed as that the Thug has entirely disappeared, and is known to our generation only from reading. The trader and traveller now pass along the loneliest highway without losing a pin. If a corpse were now discovered in a well, or found by the side of a jungle, it would cause a general uproar in the community, and create a greater sensation than the irruption of a Mahratta horde. The wicked have been weaned from their life of rapine, and taught to subordinate themselves to the authorities of society and the state. But the mutiny was a fatal error, and it once more plunged the country into the misrule of past ages. It jeopardized the vital interests of India, and was to have proved suicidal of her fate. The exit of the English would have undone all the good that is slowly

* 'Rambles and Recollections,' vol. ii. p. 181.

paving the way to her regeneration. Rightly understood, to own the government of the English is not so much to own the government of that nation, as to own the government of enlightened legislation, of the science and civilization of the nineteenth century, of superior intelligence and genius, of knowledge itself. Under this view no right-minded Hindoo ought to feel his national instincts offended, and his self-respect diminished, by allegiance to a foreign rule. 'The regeneration of his country must be the dearest object to the heart of every enlightened Hindoo, and it must be perfectly evident to him that the best mode of attaining this end is by striving to raise himself to the level of his rulers. What can the most patriotic Hindoo wish for better than that his country should, until its education as a nation is further advanced, continue part of the greatest and most glorious of empires, under a sovereign of the purest Aryan blood?'

The copper coins still current in the North-West markets are the *damrie* and *dubbul* of the Mahomedans. Before the Queen's *pice* is coined in tenfold quantities, it cannot suffice for circulation in these populous provinces. Cowries are also current, as in Bengal, but on a much more limited scale for their scarcity. The cowrie enters into the fraction of Hindoo arithmetic, and is not likely to go out of vogue till India becomes a thorough bank-note world. The proposed introduction of a paper currency, and Menu's payments in *panas*, will make the extremes of two ages meet.

The little prevalence of idolatry in Hindoostan, as

compared with Bengal, has already been dwelt upon in a preceding page. Large towns have their temples and gods. But each village, as in Bengal, has not its tutelary *Shiva* and *Shustee*. From Allahabad to Mynporee we have not met with one single instance of that *indispensable* of a Bengal village—a little round stone painted with vermillion, and placed beneath an aged banyan or peepul tree—which acts as the guardian deity of a rural community. In one single street of Calcutta, there are more images of Krishna and emblems of Shiva, than perhaps in the whole length of the Doab—and this in Bengal, which is at the intellectual headship of India.

Travelling like ours may be compared to the run of a horse in a race. Given the distance, and given the time—to finish the career. There is no time to lose—no time to look about leisurely—no time to pick up any statistics—no time to inquire into the state of education, the prevalence of crime, or the nature of diseases peculiar to these provinces—no time to visit any of the big folks of the land, and sound their opinions—and no time to view the hut of a peasant, and hear his domestic tale. All these the world now cares to read and know. But on—on we go in a breathless haste, keeping our eyes fixed only upon the goal, and leaving unfulfilled the legitimate duties of a traveller. Ours is seeing 'the world from a gig.'

Saw two Europeans on their way to Agra. They were travelling by an European dawk, and soon outstripped us to justify how everything native stands at a discount. Only three short years ago, how beset were

these roads for such a journey to one of their race. Scouring bands of ruffians then marched and countermarched in all directions to discover the lurking-places of fugitive Englishmen, and destroy every one of them from the face of the land. The white-skin was under proscription, and all the *Goralogues* who escaped from an immediate massacre sought safety in flight and concealment. Few there were who did not change their clothes, and borrowing rustic attire disguise themselves to belie their race and country. Many had painted their faces to pass off as beggars or porters with baskets on their heads. Turned adrift all of a sudden, the forlorn Sahebs, in most instances poor stragglers left to help themselves, knew not whither to go in a country up against them. They proceeded on foot, shunning all road-side towns and villages, and creeping along hedges and across ploughed fields, to avoid raising a hue and cry after them. The tall jungle grass, the ravine, the ditch, and the topes of mango trees, were the coverts in which they skulked alone by day and night. Ladies are known to have braved fording the Jumna at chin-deep water. Few of the fugitives had any food for two or three days together. Those who found a refuge passed weeks and months in the cabins of peasants, in cow-sheds, fowl-houses, and hay-stacks —living all the while upon the chappaties and lentil-porridge of the villagers. Long shall the tales of their adventures be told by the Christmas fires of many an English household. But the state of things has been altered. The Briton is once more master of the land,

and drives fearlessly through hundreds of miles of a disarmed and peaceful country. Indeed, so complete is the restoration to tranquillity that 'a purse of gold might be exposed on the highway, and no one would touch it.' This shows how a reaction is always proportioned to the fierceness of an outbreak, as well in the moral as in the physical world. Greater also is the elasticity of human society, the more it has advanced in civilization.

To proceed through a dreary tract there very opportunely occur in it a Jain temple and Durmshala—strongly reminding of such institutions in the days of Asoca. The garden and well in the midst of an arid plain are welcome to the sunburnt and weary traveller. The great depth of the well indicates the elevation of the country above the sea. The garden is intersected by little pucka *nullahs* or aqueducts to carry off water for distribution throughout the orchard. Nothing refreshed us so much as a bath in the cool waters of the well, coming as they were from the deep bowels of the earth.

But the way to Agra seems endless and eternal. The same mango topes, the same processions of loaded carts, and the same naked mud-villages, continue to afflict with their unvaried prospect, and growing into a sore monotony make the journey provokingly tedious and wearisome. In our impatience, we longed and panted for Agra, as does the thirsty traveller in a sandy desert for an oasis. Often did we inquire from passengers on the road to make the assurance of our arrival

there doubly sure—and an answer in the affirmative alone helped to keep up our spirits. The confines of the district were at length gained, and before long was read the 'Agra Police Thana' written in broad capitals upon a signboard put up at the entrance of *Ferozabad.*

The Chandwar of the twelfth century is Ferozabad of the nineteenth. Stop, traveller! 'Thy tread here is upon an empire's dust.' The fields that you see spread around you form the memorable battle-ground on which was decided the contest between the Hindoo and Mussulman for the sovereignty of India. Six hundred and sixty-six years ago, the Hindoo banner waved here for the last time, and the sun went down witnessing the last day of Hindoo independence. Here fell the heroes *Alha* and *Udal*—two brothers, whose memory is still preserved 'in the songs and traditions of the people amongst the Chandals of Mahoba and the Rahtores and Chandals of the Doab.'* It was here that the last Hindoo Rajah, Jychand of Kanouge, met with the due of his treachery from Mohamed Ghori; and acting the finale of the great Hindoo drama, closed his career by a *traitor's leap* into the Ganges.

No importance is now possessed by Ferozabad—there is no trace of the wall by which it was formerly surrounded. The present inhabitants dwell in humble cottages. Baber more than once alludes to this place under its ancient name. There exists no clue to trace

* Their disappearance in the forest of *Kajaliban*, or the *Kajali* jungle, is a myth.

the origin of its present denomination. The decayed mosques and tombs scattered about the spot, speak more of the Moslem than of the Hindoo.

Out of Ferozabad, the Grand Trunk Road is shaded on either hand by rows of beautiful *neem* trees, forming a fitting royal road towards the seat of royalty. The more we now proceeded along, the more did the Islamite peep out from every side of the country.

The Coachee Phaeton was driving fast the car in heaven towards the west, and we in the nether world emulated his example. Our way lay through a country that was little inhabited. Observed a herd of wild antelopes browsing almost by the road-side. Pushed on without rest or respite to reach Agra before sunset. Near Mahmedabad, the road takes a bend to avoid a large piece of shallow water, in the midst of which is seen to stand a beautiful but unknown mausoleum, connected with the main land by a causeway of many arches. The architecture is too superior to be of rural hands, and evidently announced the proximity of the metropolis. But journeying on without end, tantalized hope grew fainter and fainter, as night began to set in, and still there lay before us several miles of ground. Giving up the chase in despair, and slackening our pace, we left the horse to wend slowly on his way. The broad full moon rose in the East with a brightness that is witnessed only on a clear autumn evening in Bengal. In a little time, several straggling lights in the distance caught our eye. The far-off hum of men also came, softly wafted on the air, to break in upon the stillness of the

night. On arrival at the spot, the lights were found to have proceeded from several lamps hung in the front of a row of confectionery shops making a little bazar. Indeed, the grocers and victuallers of a place are sometimes the best exponents of its character to a stranger. 'Tell me,' says Lord Chesterfield, 'the name of your company, and I will tell you who you are.' In the same manner—'tell me the kind of food you live upon, and I will tell you how you fare.' The first favourable or unfavourable inference of a people's condition may safely be drawn by a stranger from their victualling shops. The bazar is a great field of statistics to found upon them the most important conclusions. Had there been nobody to tell us the fact of our having gained the purlieus of imperial Agra, it would have transpired of itself from the unmistakable shops that can belong only to an imperial city. 'If nothing else gave a superiority to Hindoostan over Bengal, its cheap and excellent viands would certainly do so,' remarked our worthy tradesman, who has a notable fondness for all kinds of saccharine food.

The immediate approach to Agra lies through a rugged ground broken into deep ravines—the abode of wolves. The Jumna still lay concealed from the view. But before long, that bright and tranquil stream was caught sight of flowing beneath a high precipitous bank with an inaudible murmur. The bosom of the river was spanned by a bridge of boats from shore to shore. The bridge is lighted up after night-fall by lamp-posts at intervals. It is guarded by police. Once every day,

it is opened for the passage of the trading crafts upwards and downwards. The breach thus daily made is daily repaired. But to put our patience to a sore trial, it happened to be left open by an unlucky turn out on the very night of our arrival, and proving a bar to our driving right on into the city, obliged us to put up with the inconvenience of passing the night in our gharries on the bridge. To make the best of our time under the circumstance, we fell to a musing on the scene before us. On our left lay moored many a boat, the tall masts of which stood like gaunt shadowy figures in the air. From their decks gleamed the fitful fires of the cooking *dandees*. The river was one flood of moon-lit glory. Beyond rose the dark outlines of the city—'the pulse of life stood still there.'

CHAPTER VIII.

October 31*st.*—At the break of day, the evil genius of reality dispelled the nocturnal illusion, and the tell-tale sun disclosed things in their actual condition. The clear blue Jumna, the classic stream of love and song, scarcely meandered its course of sluggish waters through sandbanks spreading most unpoetic wastes to the view. The bridge was not the self-same bridge of life-sized elephants of hollow lead, which had been flung across the stream in the days of Akber. Decking the river, there were no gay royal barges trimmed with flags and pennons waving in the air. Far inland in these shallow waters, there can ever hope to ply only little pleasure-steamers drawing two feet water. The wretched shipping of Agra at once indicates its fallen greatness, its decayed trade, and its diminished opulence. The pontoon, however, affords a scene of great liveliness. There jog on loaded donkeys, horses, camels, and waggons; ekas and dawk-gharries; turbaned Hindoostanees on foot and on horse, garment-wearing Hindoostanee women, and merchants, travellers, and fakirs—all in a continuous stream and motley procession.

The sight of a Jumna sandbank recalls to mind the birthplace of Vyas. To verify the legend, the mists, too, hung upon the river—though not at the call of a Hindoo Rishi. But there was no ferry, nor any youthful maid to helm you to the other side. This is not the age of romance, but that of the Penal Code—when a love-adventure like that of Parasara is *rape*, and when females cannot choose to grant favours of a tender kind without scandal in society. The scene of that memorable amour is not exactly known—whether near Allahabad, Muttra, or Hastinapoor. Agra was then unknown, and Indraprastha not yet founded. The hunting excursion of Santanu proves the country to have been woody, in which was the abode of the King of the Fishermen. But no opinion can be hazarded as to even the probable site of the classic spot of Vyas' birth—whether along the course of Upper or Lower Jumna. In ancient Greece, seven cities contended for the birthplace of Homer. In ancient India, not one man cared to remember the spot where Vyas was born. The Aryan Greek decidedly surpassed the Aryan Hindoo in patriotic sentimentalism. In our age, the people along the banks of the Jumna are non-fish-eaters. But in the age of Vyas, the fishermen in these provinces were so large and powerful a class as to have had a king of their own. Perhaps, they were an aboriginal tribe—or that the pre-Buddhist Hindoos did not follow the tenet of tenderness to animal life.

Abul Fazil, the great politician of Mogul history and minister of Akber, was born on this side of the

Jumna. His father kept here a school of law and divinity. Feizi also lies buried in some unknown spot on this side. He was the first Mussulman to apply himself to a study of the Hindoo Shasters, by passing off as a Brahmin lad on a Pundit of Benares, and living under his roof. He had a great taste for books, and left behind him the most magnificent private library in that age. It consisted of 4060 books, carefully corrected and well-bound, on poetry and literature, moral and physical sciences, and theology. Akber, Abul Fazil, and Feizi are the three best characters in the whole range of Moslem history.

Looked round for the *Goolfushun* of Baber—the famous garden in which that prince had first tried to acclimatize the *ananas* (pine-apple) and the *sandal-tree* in the valley of the Doab. Very probably, the *Charbagh* of Baber afterwards became the *Rambagh* of Akber's courtiers, who preferred a residence on the cool and quiet banks of the Jumna, to the eternal bustle and noise of an imperial city. The left bank in that age had been inhabited by a large population, and had formed nearly one-third of the city, which extended over a space twenty-six miles in circumference.

Ascended a high pile of rubbish—the remains no doubt of some ancient building—to survey the suburbs. On the right opened upon us the magnificent mausoleum of the Etmad-ud-Dowla. Two or three miles distant towards the south-west, rose in view the matchless Taj —the first sight of which was a sufficient recompense for all the toils of our long journey. Through the misty

air, the dome fixed in stately height rose against the sky as if bigger than its actual dimensions.

Opinions differ as to the architectural merits of the *Etmad-ud-Dowla.* Jacquemont remarks it to be 'in execrable taste,'—while Sleeman says it is 'an exceedingly beautiful building.' The majority of travellers concur in the latter opinion. In the tomb of the Etmad-ud-Dowla lie the remains of Chaja Aias, the father of the celebrated Noor Jehan. He was a Persian foreigner, who rose by his own abilities as well as by the influence of his daughter to be the high treasurer of the realm. India was then *the* land for adventurers—it has now become the land in which honour and emolument must be sought through office. The Etmad-ud-Dowla stands near the garden of Rambagh. The valuable stones of the mosaic work have been picked out and stolen. In 1773 the fort and city of Agra had been recovered from the Jâts by Nujeeb Khan, under an understanding that he was to retain one half of the territory he might conquer, and resign the other half to the Emperor. It was then that the building and garden of the Etmud-ud-Dowla had been given away by Nujeeb Khan to one of his nephews, in whose family the mausoleum remained for sixty years, when it went to the hammer by a decree of the Civil Court, to pay the debt of its then proprietor.

To be in Agra is to find yourself in the once imperial capital of the 'Great Mogul' of Sir Thomas Roe, of Terry, of Tavernier, of Mandelsloe—in fact, of all the nations of Christendom in the seventeenth century:—

the Great Mogul then in his veritableness, and not in effigy, with which all card-players are more or less familiar. Though fallen from its high estate, still there is enough to stare at, observe, and admire in this ancient metropolis. The Quay along the left has handsome stone ghauts. To this day, as in Fitch's time, 'do the wives and daughters of the Hindoos come by ten, twenty, and thirty together, to the water-side to wash themselves, and to use their ceremonies.' But no more are there any 'naked beggars, with beards of enormous growth, hair hanging more than half down the body, and nails two inches long.'

The Fort, eighty feet high, towers in view as one enters the city. The enormous pile has rather the appearance of a castellated town than of a single palace. The first impression of it is overwhelming—and the mind lost in its own reflections has no time for the examination of details. In the words of Abul Fazil—'His Majesty has erected a fort of red stone, the like of which no traveller has ever beheld.' But British soldiers now sit with dangling feet on the ramparts of the far-famed citadel of Akber,—complacently whiffing away puffs of smoke from their meerschaums.

The open space between the quay and the fort was the *Circus Maximus* of the Emperors. It is overlooked by a balcony from which they probably witnessed the animal fights which amused the generations of that day. The gate on this side was then called, to quote William Finch, 'the Darsan Darwaza, or Gate of Sights, leading to a fair court, extending along the river, where the

King (Jehangeer) looks out every morning at sun-rising.' The nobles stood on a kind of scaffold. The King 'came there every day (except Sunday) at noon to see the *Tamasha* or fighting with elephants, lions, and buffaloes, and killing of deer by leopards. Tuesdays are peculiarly the days of blood, both for fighting beasts and killing men, as on that day the King sits in judgment, and sees it put in execution.' Great portion of this tract is now covered with piles of rubbish and bricks, presenting a sad spectacle of ruin. It was full of houses, which had to be levelled down to prevent their falling into the hands of the rebels. Only one solitary house stands uninjured in the melancholy scene —it is the premises of the well-known Lalla Joteeprosaud, spared out of regard for his valuable services to the State. The Lalla's house—within hail of the fort—is a fitting abode for the Purveyor-General of the Indian Army.

In the *Gate of Sights*, there was to have been seen of yore 'carved in stone two elephants with their riders, of exquisite workmanship'—the statues erected by Akber to the memory of *Jeimul* and *Putto*, two Rajpoot heroes of Chitore.

Gadding in the streets of Agra, under an eight o'clock sun, even in October is not very agreeable. The heat is enough to incline a man to get himself within-doors. In quest of Lallah M—'s house, we happened to accost a spare-looking but fair-complexioned and decently clad Hindoostanee gentleman, coming out of a narrow alley, followed by his servants. To our great good luck he

turned out to be a particular friend of the very individual whom we wanted. No sooner had reference been made to him, and we had announced ourselves as travellers from Calcutta, than he politely offered us the cordial welcome of *Young Hindoostan* to *Young Bengal.* Between the public mind of Hindoostan and the public mind of Bengal, there has existed for several centuries a great gulf. To bridge that gulf the epoch has arrived. Under the auspices of a liberal education, and the growth of enlightened sentiments, races of one parentage, but separated from each other by hereditary prejudices of fifty or more generations, and forming an ill-cemented mass of petty nationalities, are to acknowledge one common brotherhood, and form one great welded nation throughout the empire.

The *Lallah*, in Hindoostan, is the same that the *Kayust* is in Bengal. 'If other employments failed a Sudra,' says Menu, 'he should subsist by writing.' This has given an hereditary excellence in caligraphy, which has enabled the Kayust to rival the Brahmin. The enlightened of his brotherhood, often monopolizing all public business, at last rose to the importance of the official class in Hindoo society, and acquired that administrative experience which so greatly distinguishes a Kayust from the rest of his nation. But the Lallah in Hindoostan has few of those nation-splitting prejudices about caste, in which a Kayust of Bengal is so prone to indulge to disguise the mortification for his loss of status. The old story of the *Brahmin* from the mouth, the *Khetrya* from the arms, the *Vaisa* from the

waist, and the *Sudra* from the feet of Brahma, is well known. But there was a certain Kayust Baboo who undertook to revise the Code of Menu, and assigned to his class a birth from the *Kaya* or body of Brahma. 'Then also,' did a Brahmin curtly reply, 'are the *Harees* from the *har* (bones), and the *Podhs* from the *posteriors* of Brahma?' The pointed anecdote goes far to explain the character of the orthodox Kayust in Bengal.

The Lallah, our host, is an Income-Tax Assessor. He has a press and edits an Oordoo paper. He also maintains a school at his own private expense. The other day his institution was highly spoken of by the first man of this city. The Lallah, our friend, is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon in the Thomason Hospital. He is a native of Delhi, and has passed himself as a graduate of the Calcutta Medical College, to benefit his countrymen by the use of the English lancet and the English quinine —to help them out from the hands of *Lokeman Hakeem*. It would be a sin of omission not to do justice to the dinner of the Lallahs. As Macaulay is said to have remarked, that 'if he were to forget everything of India, he could never forget Captain Richardson's reading of Shakspeare'—so if we were to forget everything of Hindoostan, we could never forget the sumptuous dinner of the Lallahs. In comparing Hindoostanee and Bengalee cookery, the balance is decidedly in favour of the former. The simplest food of the Hindoostanee—*keecheery*—is, or at least was, the richest dish of the Bengalee. Meat is sold here in the native bazars, and the Hindoo women of Agra do not object to cook the

meat, which the Hindoo women of Calcutta do not allow to pass the threshold of their doors. The dinner was served on a divan in the Mahomedan style. It would be a mistake to suppose this as a common feature in the living of the Hindoos of Agra. The strict mode of Hindoo eating is on the floor—the rich sometimes painting it, in the olden times. But living in a Mahomedan town, the Hindoo population of Agra is tainted with many *Mahomedanisms*. Their food has lost its Hindoo simplicity, and assumed the sumptuousness of Mahomedan cookery. From being Mahomedanized, our manners are in a fair way of being Anglicized. In one or two generations more it would be difficult to trace any of the original features in our national character.

Not alone in point of eating, but also in dressing, and in politeness, do the North-Westerns beat us. As far as the outward air of good breeding goes, almost every Agra-wallah is well-bred. The decorum of his appearance, and the propriety of his speech, indicate the civilized life that is spent in a metropolis. The local dialect is the polished Oordoo, in which one can hardly detect a vulgarism. Not a little do the Agra-wallahs pride themselves in their refinements of an ancient metropolitan citizenship. Hence the contemplated removal of the Presidency to Allahabad has seriously alarmed them, as likely to deprive them of their long-enjoyed honours, to hinder their advance in intelligence and wealth, and to do away with their proud name of citizens. From being the capital of the North-West,

Agra is to dwindle into a second-rate or third-rate city, and from refined citizens they will have to be merged into the rank of a provincial gentry.

¶t was at the house of our host that we happened after many days to take up the latest number of the *Delhi Gazette*, and read the latest telegram from England. The newspaper-reading public of Agra is daily increasing in number. The native press already counts four papers in Oordoo—all weeklys. As yet these infant newspapers are 'mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.' In time they are expected to become powerful organs—heard across the ocean. The *press* and the *platform* are that for which England is the great benefactress of India. It is to be hoped that the *élite* of Hindoostan should be wisely engaged more in defending the true interests of their country, than in parrying arms with a redoubtable foe. As to one who has studied the history of the Press in India, how it has disappointed him to find it exhibit chiefly the barking warfare between an Indian Pariah and an English Bull-dog.*

The parlour of our host is by itself a sufficient commentary on the taste and habits of *Young Hindoostan*. It looks out upon a little plot, laid out in flower-beds. The walls of the room are not hung with the miniatures of the sensualist Jehangeer or the *Nemazee* Aurungzebe, but pictures of an 'English Cottage Scene' or 'Fox-

* It is with unfeigned pleasure that the natives now mark a generous and kindly change in the tone of the most authoritative paper on this side of India,—a tone of right-mindedness that should guide the pen of those who have it in their hands.

hunting Race.' There are, too, an English map of the world, and an Oordoo map of India. Upon a bracket against the wall ticked away the huge pendulum of a Sam Slick. Facing it stood a cast of Sir Walter Scott. The book-shelf made a choice little library, to which our lawyer added a copy of 'Thornton's Gazetteer.' Chairs and sofas lay in the room—but to recline against a cushion on the divan can never be out of vogue amongst the sons of a sunny land.

To our kind Hindoostanee friends we were obliged for procuring a carriage and pair to take us through the town. First and foremost lay the Fort in our way. From its vastness, its prominence, and its grandeur, the structure looks like the reality of a magnificent castle in an Eastern tale. Though fully three hundred years old, it has yet all the freshness of a new-built architecture. The exterior coating of stone gives it an imposing air of impregnability.

Here and there it has been partially modernized, but on the whole it still retains greatly the originality of its appearance. The Fort of Agra derives all its strength from art; nothing from nature. It was certainly impregnable in the days of archery. But it can hardly stand for a couple of hours against modern gunnery. Military architecture must keep pace with the improvement of military weapons. High towers, and battlements, and massive walls, characterized the fortifications of the ancients. Trenches, mounds, ravelins, and bastions constitute the defensive works of the moderns. In days of old, muscles fought against muscles.

Now, the fight of mind against mind has to decide the fate of a battle. In the age of Akber, this citadel defied any number of sword-fighting Patans, or lance-bearing Rajpoot chivalry. But in this age science must defend against what science attacks.

The outer ditch and rampart formerly surrounding the fort have disappeared. The first has been filled up to form a part of the great pathway which bisects the city. The inner moat, thirty feet wide, and paved with freestone, still exists. The great height of the inner rampart defies all escalade.

To give access to the interior, the citadel has two stupendous gates well maintaining a relative proportion to the vast dimensions of the fortress. The one by which we made our entry was originally called the *Bokhara Gate.* But circumstances of a subsequent date changed this name into *Umra Sing Ka fatuck,* from a chief of celebrity in the Rajpoot annals. Umra had been born the heir-apparent to the throne of Marwar. But excluded from succession by his father, he had repaired to the court of Shah Jehan, and been employed as a munsubdar in the imperial army. He had on one occasion absented himself from the court for a fortnight, spending the time in his favourite diversion of hunting. The Emperor reprimanded him for keeping away from his duties, and imposed a fine which the paymaster-general was sent to realize. Umra refused payment, on which a peremptory mandate was issued for his attendance at the court. He obeyed the call. The Emperor sat in full durbar surrounded by a

brilliant aristocracy. But unceremoniously passing by all the Omrahs, Umra proceeded towards the king, and plunged a dagger into the heart of the paymaster-general. The next blow was aimed at the king, who abandoned his throne, and fled to the inner apartments. All was uproar and confusion. Umra continued the work of death, indifferent upon whom his blows fell. Five Mogul chiefs of eminence died on the spot. On Umra's expiring from a mortal wound inflicted by his brother-in-law, his retainers commenced a fresh carnage within the *Loll Killah* or the Palace of Red Freestone. The faithful band was overpowered and cut to pieces. Umra's wife, a princess of Boondi, came in person to carry away the dead body of her lord. This tragic event could not fail to have produced a terrible sensation in the court of that day. The gallantry which had set at defiance the authority of the potentate of the Empire, had become the subject of an universal admiration. To commemorate that conspicuous gallantry, the Bhokara gate, by which Umra and his followers had gained admission, was ordered to be built up and called by the name of *Umra Sing's gate.* It was thenceforward denounced to be guarded by a huge serpent. Under this accursed *talac* or interdiction it had remained closed for the long period of 175 years, until opened in 1809 by a Captain of the Bengal Engineers. He was told of the anathema under which the gate lay. But regardless of the idle story, the young British captain went on with his operations. To his surprise, however, as the act of demolition had been completed,

there suddenly rushed between his legs a large cobra from which he narrowly escaped biting.*

The European sentry, pacing to and fro beneath the overhanging arch of the colossal gateway, seemed dwarfed into an automaton by the gigantic proportions surrounding him. The body of the gateway is built of solid masonry ten feet thick. Flanking its sides are two enormous towers, continued inwards in a range of buildings showing a beautiful succession of alternate niches and small arched openings. Surmounting the top is the *Nagara-khana*—whence the State kettle-drum formerly sounded its tocsin to the populace of the city. The inscriptions of black marble, inlaid in slabs of white marble set in the red freestone, are in characters huge enough to be in keeping with the immensity of the building.

In the interior the Fort looks like a city within a city. On the 26th July, 1857, during the mutiny, Mr Colvin, the late Lieutenant-Governor, took a census of all who slept within the Fort. The number counted 5845—the population of a respectable township.

From the height of the Fort is commanded a beautiful view of the city. The river winds its sinuous course like a silvery streak. The boundless expanse of corn-fields, woods, and meadows spreads towards the distant north. The wilderness of domes, turrets, minarets, and steeples glitter in the sun—'the Taj, like a presiding genius, rising above them all.' The streets intersect each other in various directions. The houses of the inhabitants swarm in a clustering mass. Far as

* Tod's Rajasthan, vol. ii. p. 46.

the suburbs, innumerable ruins and tombs are scattered over a wide extent. 'In strange contrast to the airy proportions and polished structure of the buildings, were the great, heavy, lumbering boats, creeping down the stream, heaped up with bags of cotton; all clumsy and half-civilized, carrying the mind back centuries beyond the generation that could design and execute the buildings on the banks of the river.'

The *Dewani-khas*, or the private council-chamber of Akber, overlooks the river from an elevated terrace. The rooms appeared to us as models of perfection. The interior surface is overlaid with white marble. Of the same material are the columns and arches, ornamented with carving. Traces of gilding are yet visible on the fillet of the columns. Here did Akber hold his cabinets —planning schemes for the invasion of Bengal, and the conquest of Cashmere. Here Abul Fazil penned the state-despatches to the fifteen *soubahs* of the empire. Here Rajah Maun waited for the royal behest to march to Cuttack or to Cabul. Here Rajah Toder Mull discussed the assessments of revenue with his imperial master. From this regal tower, perhaps, did Jehangeer suspend his famous *golden chain of justice*, weighing three quarters of a ton, and measuring one hundred and forty guzz in length, with eighty small bells at intervals, to carry up the complaint of the poorest subject direct to the royal ear. The last years of Shah Jehan were passed here as in a royal cage. In the day of his power, the Mahratta sat in this hall exhibiting his pomp and state. Nothing can be more affecting than what it

was and what it is. The sanctity of the place is certainly violated by warehousing commissariat stores in the vaults below.

On the open terrace is seen the rarity of a *takht* or throne of black marble, some twelve feet square by two feet high, hewn out entire with the legs from a block. Fancy is apt to regard this throne as where Akber sat on a sultry night to enjoy the cool of the open air, and the moonlight resting upon the river—for he had a soul no less for poetry than for politics—exchanging brilliant repartees with Rajah Beerbul, or hearing a song from Tansen, or holding religious controversies with Padrees, Pundits, and Moulvies, to astound them all with his latitudinarianism. The *takht* has suffered a slight crack in one of the corners. There is also a smaller one near the staircase leading to the terrace; the marble in this instance is white.

The vicar in the tale had not a more easy journey from the blue bed to the brown, than the Mogul Emperor from his palace to the harem. The most remarkable of the female apartments is the *Sheesha Mahl*, or the Hall of Mirrors. Inside the room the walls are lined with small-sized mirrors, hiding all masonry from the view. In the middle is a beautiful *jet d'eau*, made to gush from an orifice in the mosaic pavements, and to fling its delicious coolness throughout the room. To distribute the waters there are marble channels on the floor, inlaid with a variety of stones. Coming from the warm outside air the temperature of the room is felt as that of a temperate latitude. The view of the river is

enjoyed through an exquisite latticed screen of white marble. In one place the beautiful screen has been injured by a cannon-ball bursting in during the siege of the British army in 1803. One is apt to enjoy in imagination the scene which this magnificent crystal-hall presented, when Jodh Baie, or Noor Jehan, or Mumtaza Begum, gazed at their reflected images in the mirrors, and almost grew enamoured of their own matchless beauties. The hall is out of all order now. Time has dimmed the lustre of the mirrors. The fountain is made to play only in honour of visitors. The thin, small glasses betray the imperfection of the manufacture in that age.

It requires repeated visits to go leisurely through all the curiosities of the Fort. As we passed by the other apartments of the Zenana, we thought of the creatures who formerly lingered here in a splendid cage, and had been kept as it were in a menagerie for divers specimens of female ethnology; and who, lolling in luxury, sighed for the humblest lot and freedom. The seraglio of Akber contained 5000 women—it was a rich and varied garden, exhibiting the choicest flowers of beauty culled and collected from Rajasthan, Cashmere, Cabul, Iran, and Toorkistan. But by no means does the enclosure of the harem appear to be so large as to have had 'a separate room for each of the inmates.' Hereabouts also used to be held those annual fairs of the *Koosrooz*, which were decidedly an anticipation of the *Fancy fairs* of the nineteenth century. In those fairs, the wives and daughters of the nobles, Mogul as

well as Rajpoot, assembled and exposed for sale their artistic wares; and the Emperor stalked forth in disguise like a royal wizard lured by the scent of female flesh and blood. On 'one of these celebrations of Koosrooz, the monarch of the Moguls was struck with the beauty of the daughter of Mewar, and he singled her out from amidst the united fair of Hind as the object of his passion. It is not improbable that an ungenerous feeling united with that already impure to despoil the Sesodias of their honour, through a princess of their house under the protection of the sovereign. On retiring from the fair, she found herself entangled amidst the labyrinth of apartments by which egress was purposely ordained, when Akber stood before her; but instead of acquiescence, she drew a poniard from her corset, and held it to his breast, dictating, and making him repeat the oath of renunciation of the infamy to all her race.'

Though their Mogul Majesties were pleased to reduce the high-born ladies of the land to a titled *strumpetocracy*, they could not brook, however, that any of their own ladies should be guilty of a criminal familiarity. But flesh and blood sometimes rebelled, and a lady, happening to have her head turned perhaps by the *Kitabi Kuslum Nanah*,* and mourning herself as

* The 'Kitabi Kooslum Nanah' is the work of a conclave of seven learned ladies of Persia on the rights of woman. According to these ladies there are three classes of husbands in the world :—1. A proper man. 2. Half a man. And 3. A Hupul-pupla. If the wife of the last man absents herself from his house, even for ten days and nights, he must not, on her return, ask where she has been ; and if he sees a stranger in the house, he must not ask who it is, or what he wants.

'Confined to one dull spot,
To one dull husband all the year,'

dared to break out in vagaries against his *hupul-pupla* Majesty. In such a case, there is a dark-vaulted chamber, that may be seen to this day, in which the ill-starred creature was quietly disposed of, to conceal from publicity the shame of the royal household. 'Leaving the Zenana, we descended to a large open court, where a low flight of steps led up to the Emperor's apartments; beneath the steps is a low, ominous looking doorway, entering which we were on the top of a dark winding staircase, leading to the *tai-khana*, a set of caverns, or rather catacombs, that honeycomb the ground beneath the palace: those chambers opening on the river were airy and pleasant, of a comfortable warmth this cold morning, and of course proportionably cool in the hot weather; but the interior cells seemed a formidable complication of dark vaults, passages, and steps. We were lighted by a torch through some of these recesses, and to one of especial interest leading to the *Phanseghur*. Turning to the right, a few yards of narrow, winding passage between dead walls, brought us to the end of a *cul de sac*, where the only opening was a hole, broken in the left-hand wall, just large enough to squeeze through. The light and noise accompanying our approach disturbed hosts of bats and birds that flapped and wheeled about our heads. Our guide squeezed first through the breach, and stood, waving his torch over a deep chasm, like a huge dry well, across which ran a strong beam of wood, dangling with ropes. There was

a most offensive stench from the pit; I looked down, but there was not light enough to see the bottom, and I was glad to make my escape from the odours and vermin of the place. The tale I heard, in explanation of this mysterious vault, is, that for years the "passage leading to nothing" had been a puzzle to those who visited the tai-khanas. At last some remarked that the wall to the left hand sounded hollow when struck, and this discovery was followed up by Sir Charles Metcalfe, I think, who broke the hole already mentioned, and found the formidable pit I have described: to the beam that traverses it were hanging the remains of human skeletons, which the learned pronounced to be those of *females*. Putting all circumstances together, this pit was supposed to be the place where the obnoxious ladies of the Harem were disposed of,—a "cleanlier riddance" of them, their wrongs and crimes, than the Turkish plan of sewing them in sacks, conveniently near as the Jumna flows to the palace of Agra.'

To the *Dewanni-aum*, or the hall of public audience, which is in an open space, capable of holding several throngs of people that daily crowded it in the times of the Mogul emperors. This is one of the largest halls to be seen in India, being 180 feet long by 60 broad. The structure is at once noble and simple, but its airy and lightsome character has been taken away by walling up the open arches with windows. In the interior the great hall is supported by graceful pillars and arches of white marble, all exhibiting the highest polish. Here is still to be seen the throne on which Akber daily sat

in durbar, surrounded by his Omrahs and Munsubdars, to dispense justice to his subjects, and to receive the ambassadors and envoys of foreign monarchs. The marble slab, on which the secretaries stood to present petitions and receive commands, also exists. In those days this great hall was decorated with rich crimson awnings and tapestries. The 'seat royal' was elevated and surrounded by two successive railings—the innermost space forming the scene of honour, which was occupied by the ambassadors and the officers of state 'wearing high heron plumes and sparkling with diamonds like the firmament,' and altogether making a dazzling appearance that made Sir Thomas Roe declare it to have been 'one of the greatest rarities and magnificences' he ever saw. The throne, as described by Terry (Sir Thomas Roe's chaplain), 'had a canopy of pure gold, the steps plated with silver, and ornamented with five silver lions spangled with jewels.'* But in the midst of all this splendour, Akber always 'appeared with as much simplicity as dignity in a plain dress.' Purchase, also another European eye-witness, says, that Akber was so affable that 'he stood or sat below the throne to administer justice.' The splendid marble hall of the *Dewanni-aum*, which has witnessed so many splendid durbars and pageants—in which were received ambassadors, 'from near the setting sun, from a great city of infidels, called London, where reigned a woman, who had given to an association of merchants the exclusive

* Jehangeer gives a fuller description of this throne in his autobiography.

privilege of freighting ships from her dominions to the Indian Seas'—the self-same hall is now an armoury of the Lieutenants of another Woman, reigning in the present day at that identical city of London. Instead of embroidered awnings and screens, the hall is now decorated with trophies of Chinese flags waving from its graceful columns. The famous Somnauth Gates, which once made so much bruit without any fruit, are seen here to be quietly laid up in a corner of the hall. The gates, eleven feet long by nine broad, verify Ferishta's account of Somnauth to have been five yards high. The beautiful arabesques carved on the marble, attest to the taste of Mahmud, acquired from the Hindoo architecture of ante-Mahomedan India, and the Cufic characters on the borders record his triumph over Hindoo idolatry. From Diu to Ghizni, and from Ghizni back to Agra, is the history of Somnauth's migrations up to the present day. Not more are fossils proofs of the existence of the Mammoth, than these stones are proofs of the existence of Somnauth. From having been worshipped by generations of Hindoos, they were next trampled under-foot by generations of Mussulmans. The stones formed the threshold of Mahmud's mosque of the 'Celestial Bride'—in its age, the wonder of the East. On the recapture of Ghizni, General Nott bore the stones away as a trophy of trophies. In the eyes of Lord Ellenborough, the remains of Somnauth had a political importance from which he wanted to make political capital. The rescue of their god was proclaimed to the Hindoo nation in an ukase, indited from the top of the Himalayas.

But the idolatrous Hindoos of the nineteenth century made no response to welcome the return of a deity dead to them for many a century, and whose name and memory had passed away into oblivion. It was his carcass only that still survived the wear and tear of 800 years—and who does not know the repugnance of a Hindoo towards a carcass, whether it be that of a human being or of a god? On the one hand, the Somnauth Gates are a trophy of British success in Affghanistan; on the other, the Chinese flags are a trophy of British success in the mouth of the Yang-tse-Kiang.

Close to the *Dewanni-aum* lies interred Mr Colvin, the late Lieutenant-Governor. The spot is marked by a simple tombstone. In the same citadel where Shah Jehan ended the last unhappy years of his reign, did Mr Colvin end the last unhappy days of his career—both having been unheeded at their last moments by the outside world, and both owning at last no influence over a foot of ground beyond the fort walls.

The *Mootee Musjeed*, built entirely of pure white marbles, that make the nearest approach to the colour and lustre of a pearl, is justly entitled to its name of the Pearl Mosque. It is a chaste, simple, and majestic structure of an oblong shape, well-proportioned in its dimensions, and uniting the most refined elegance with an exquisite simplicity. The finely swelling-out domes are a triumph of architecture. The topmost gilt culisses still retain their original brilliancy. The chaste white marbles lend, indeed, a most placid and immaculate appearance. There is a tranquil beauty pervading

the whole conception of the building, on which you may look for ever without feeling the least satiety. The agreeable surprise with which it stands opened on the sight of the traveller, rivets his attention in a fervour of admiration. The marbled design seems to be instinct with life—to be endued with a dumb language. Running below the outer cornice is an inscription in Persian, which, as expounded to us by one of the Mussulman attendants, records the mosque to have been built by Shah Jehan in 1656, for the private chapel of the ladies of the harem. The cost is mentioned in *ashrufees* as equivalent to the sum of sixty lacs of rupees.

Fronting the mosque, is a large stone-built square basin to hold water for ritual ablutions. The fountain in its middle is now dry.. Turned back to take our last view of the Motee Musjeed. From a distance, it may be fancied as seeming to woo us like a Peri from heaven —as Tom Moore's Paradise-lost Houri.

The remarkable bath of Shah Jehan, hollowed out of one single block of white marble, and measuring forty feet in diameter, is no longer to be seen. This artistic curiosity had particularly attracted the notice of Lord Hastings, and he had caused it to be taken up for a present to George IV. of England, then Prince Regent. But it was found to make a too heavy freight for a native craft, and the idea of its removal was abandoned. The ultimate fate of this curious bath is unknown.

It would not be quite out of place to allude here to

the favourite drinking-cup of Jehangeer. A few years ago, it had been placed for sale in one of the English jewellery shops at Calcutta, by the ex-King of Lucknow. The cup had been scooped hollow out of an uncommonly large-sized ruby—more than three inches long, by as many broad—in the fashion of a goblet, with the name of Jehangeer inscribed upon it in golden characters. Side by side was placed also a similar but smaller cup, with a leg to stand on, which had belonged to the great Tamerlane. The drinking-bouts of Jehangeer are matter of historic celebrity,—and the cup out of which he was accustomed to drink has a historic value in the eyes of posterity, apart from all considerations of the uncommon size of the ruby. The cup having passed into private property, its whereabouts cannot be any more traced. If ever a right thing ought to have been in its right place, it was the cup of Jehangeer in the Calcutta Museum.

There had been old foundations and walls of an earlier fortification, whether Hindoo or Pathan is not exactly known, on the site where the present Fort has been built. Sleeman is wrong to have stated that 'Agra was an unpeopled waste,'—when Secunder Lodi had resided there for many years, Ibrahim Lodi too, and Baber. The date of the present Fort is 1566. Immense as are the mass of buildings, they were completed by Akber in the space only of four short years. In the opinion of Lord Lake, the Fort of Agra could not have stood against 'ten hours' breaching.'

Not longer back than the year 1832, there was to

have been seen at Agra the curiosity of a Great Gun, in the bore of which tailors worked to avoid the outside sun. The antiquity of this monster had called forth various opinions. There were some who ascribed it to the heroes of the Mahabarat. Others, going back still further, supposed it to be almost antediluvian—and nothing less than a metallified mammoth. This precious ordnance—precious it really was, for being composed of metals to which the common consent of mankind has assigned the epithet precious—had been covered with inscriptions in character similar to those on the monolithic column at Allahabad. Akber had surreptitiously got his name inscribed amongst the inscriptions, the more to confound posterity with his forgery. Once, the imperturbable gravity of the monster had been disturbed by floating it on a raft for transportation to Calcutta, and thence to England. But loath to depart away from its native soil, it chose to go down by its own momentum. The unwieldy monster lay on the bank of the Jumna, an eye-sore to economy. Before long, it was experimentalized upon by powder, blasted into fragments, and then sold off piecemeal—its sequel very much resembling the fate of an old Andamanese, who being deemed useless to live, is cut up and eaten away by his kindred. This vandalism is a just subject for the most indignant diatribes. Had this magnificent trophy been in existence to this day, its Pali or Gupta inscriptions might have thrown ample light on the antiquity of cannons in the East, and helped 'to clear up the mystery of those *thunders* and *lightnings*, with which, says Philo-

stratus, in the Life of Apollonius Tyanæus, the Oxydracæ, dwelling between the Hyphasis and Ganges, drove back Bacchus and Hercules from India.

From the Fort to the *Taj*. The way lies over a long level road, making an excellent strand. Our flighty ghauts are certainly a great set-off to the beauty of our Indian towns and cities. But the great fault of all Oriental city-building lies in the omission of strands, wide streets, and open squares. The strand of Agra is eighty feet wide. It was constructed by the labour of the destitute poor in the famine of 1838. Old masonry works, sometimes ten feet thick, falling in the way, had to be blasted by powder. One or two of the ancient houses may yet be seen—they are quite untenanted. The suburbs are rural enough with gardens and orchards, but the quarters of the living poor are as squalid as anywhere in an Indian town.

Got out of the carriage to land in a large cloistered serai attached to the Taj. Formerly, travellers coming to visit the tomb, were accommodated and entertained here at the State expense—charity suiting so well with the memory of the dead. Then commences the grand quadrangular enclosure of lofty red sandstone walls, with turrets at the angles. The quadrangle is from east to west nine hundred and sixty-four feet, and from north to south three hundred and twenty-nine. The principal entrance lies through a tall wide gateway beating that of the Fort. As yet, the Taj keeps itself unseen, like a coy maid, or is secluded like an Indian Zenana from bursting at once on the spectator's view.

The sight is obstructed by the stupendous portal, in which nothing is so striking as the yawning arch carried up to a lofty height. Slowly, as the gateway is passed, does the Taj stand revealed to the eye, through a charming vista, with all the graceful majesty of its form, the unsullied chasteness of its appearance, and the voiceless eloquence of its queenly beauty—

> 'Marked with a mild angelic air,
> The rapture of repose that's there'—

looking, as it were, typical of that superlative beauty which it has been intended to perpetuate—a beauty not more fascinating in life than in death. In short, it is Mumtaza herself, but living Mumtaza no more.

The sight of the Taj is an epoch in a man's life—it is looked forward to by thousands who admire it in description. Nothing can be more grand than the spacious square marble terrace from which the mausoleum rises in its unequalled stateliness. More than two thousand persons might stand upon the broad platform, which expands the mind with its expanse. The marbles of the pavement are alternately white and yellow, and cut into regular squares. To this day, their polish is as fresh as if it had been finished yesterday. From the four corners of the terrace, rise four tall minarets. Not a little is the effect or enchantment of the Taj heightened by the choice of its site in a fine open tract, overlooking the clear blue stream of the Jumna. Immediately below the garden, the river keeps water all the year round. The temperature of the spot is charming. From the hot oven of the city, it is

a luxury, indeed, to enjoy the cool genial air of the garden or terrace.

The Taj—alone in its loveliness—exceeds all expectations. It never satiates—the more you look at it, the more you will discover something new to admire. Indeed, much attention has been paid to preserve that relative proportion of all the parts in which consists the principal skill in architecture. To give an example—though a very trite one—the topmost culisses are apparent to the eye as two gilt howitzer balls, and yet, in reality, they must be of the size of two big spheres to appear as such from their great height. The very top is crowned by a gilt crescent—the standard of Islam. The actual mausoleum is octagonal. No description can give an adequate idea of 'the vast and wondrous dome'—with which a traveller would not 'name that of St Peter in the same breath.' The slight bulbousness is certainly to be condemned, but no comparison can be ever instituted between it and the ill-proportioned dome of the Vice-regal Palace at Calcutta. From the ground, the structure measures 275 feet in height. It is, therefore, not only the loftiest building in the plains of India, but in all the old hemisphere. No country in the world can rival the valley of the Jumna in the abundance, or greatness, or excellence of its architectural curiosities, and above them all stands the unequalled Taj—'more like a vision of beauty than a reality, a dream in solid, palpable, and permanent marble—a thought, an idea, a conception of tenderness, a sigh as it were of eternal devotion and heroic love,

caught and imbued with such immortality as the earth can give.'

Outside, everything is on a scale that makes up the great and grand. In the interior, is witnessed all that is light and exquisite in human workmanship. The wreaths and tendrils, the foliage and flowers on the walls, display almost the delicacy of a supernatural execution. The lattices of the windows may be regarded as the works of a fairy hand. One is here best convinced of how far the obdurate marble can be made to yield to the chisel of man. From some of the flowers being of the shape of a tulip, which is foreign to the Indian Flora, the Taj is supposed to have been constructed by foreign architects. But it would be highly unsatisfactory to decide the question merely by this slight reference to a point in horticulture. As well may the pillars of Asoca, carved upon the top with the honeysuckle, be thought the works of Egyptian hands. The inscriptions on the walls are homilies from the Koran—actual 'sermons in stones.' The inlaid characters in diamond, and other precious stones, have been all abstracted away by the pelf-loving Jaut and Mahratta—leaving the walls defaced with the hollow marks of the chisel.

There is, indeed, one exception to the harmony of proportion in the Taj—rather apparent than real. It is the low entrance to the interior—probably to walk in with the stooping bow of respectful homage. The Moguls built gigantic arches, but preferred low pigeon-hole doors, to oblige a man to dwarf himself in ap-

proaching the imperial presence, and to tell against the abnormal aristocracy of the human mind. To this may be attributed the fashion of low doors all over Hindoostan. The door of the mausoleum corresponds to a hair-breadth exactness with the door of the gateway, and the vista through the avenue of cypress shows that the Indians were not so ignorant of linear perspective as it is supposed.

Just in the middle of the apartment, underneath the great cupola, are the cenotaphs of the royal pair. They lie side by side,—of course the Empress on the side next to the heart of her lord—the assigned place of woman, whether in life or death. Mussulmans sleep facing the south; the Hindoos do it facing the opposite direction. The cenotaphs are protected by marble screen-works, elegant and delicate beyond description.

The actual sarcophagi are in the vaults below. The two tombs are in one enclosure of marble railing, and exactly correspond in position with the cenotaphs above. The lustre of their marble vies with the lustre of the modern queens-ware glass. A candle-light was held to examine the richness and beauty of the flowers on the slabs, all set with a tastefulness and variety and nicety to which no description can ever do justice. There is inlaid on the slab over the Empress a flower of 100 different stones. The Arabic inscriptions recording her virtues are bedecked with the most precious gems, which the hand of sacrilege has not dared to pilfer away. Her name, 'Mumtaza Mahl Ranoo Begum,' and the date of her death, 1631, are read on the slab. That of her

husband and the date of his death, 1666, are also inscribed upon the other tomb. In one of the passages carved on the slab of the queen, there is a deprecation to 'defend us from the tribe of the unbelievers'—as there is a supplication on the tombstone of Shakspeare 'to forbear to dig his enclosed dust.' The profound stillness and 'dim religious light' of the vaulted chamber, are telling in a high degree. The slightest whisper awakens a sound, and 'there rolls through the obscure vault overhead a murmur like that of the sea on a pebbly beach in summer—a low sweet song of praise and peace. How an invisible choir takes it up till the reverberated echoes swell into the full volume of the sound of many voices; it is as though some congregation of the skies were chanting their earnest hymns above our heads.' On one side, reposes the monarch who sat on the Peacock Throne that surpassed the fabled thrones of Solomon or Vieramaditva—but whose bones, probably calcined into lime by age, would now drop away in atoms on exhumation and exposure to the air. On the other, sleeps the Begum, who was the ornament of womankind in her day. But what has become of the great beauty which 'held in blissful captivity' 'the heart' of a monarch who could have given it away to thousands of her sex—'from dust she came, and to dust has she returned.' Let that dust continue inviolate, and remain in its holy repose till the last awful scene of our perishable globe.

The story of the Taj is, that playing at cards one day with the Emperor, Mumtaza Begum happened to

ask him what he intended to do in case he survived her death. In a mood of dalliance, the emperor pledged his word to build over her remains a tomb which should be the admiration of the world, and commemorate her name through all ages. The death of the Begum was occasioned by her giving birth to a daughter, who is said to have been heard crying in the womb by herself and her other daughters. No mother, it is believed by superstition, has ever been known to survive the birth of a child so heard to make the ominous cry, and she felt that her end was near. The Emperor, in his anxiety, called all the midwives of the city, and all his secretaries of state and privy councillors, to aid in the recovery of the Queen. But as had been apprehended, the favourite Sultana died in two hours after the birth of a princess on the 18th day of July, 1631. On her death-bed, she had not forgotten to remind the Emperor of the tomb with which he had promised to perpetuate her name. True to his word, the tomb was commenced immediately. Tavernier says that, to build the Taj twenty thousand workmen were employed for 22 years in its erection. The brick scaffolding is said to have cost as much as the building itself. The marble had been presented by the Rajah of Jeypore, and was brought from its quarries, a distance of 140 miles, upon wheeled carriages. Mumtaza Begum was the daughter of Asoph Jah, and the niece of Noor Jehan. She had been twenty years married to Shah Jehan, and bore him a child almost every year. Bernier says, 'She was that extraordinary beauty of the East, whom the Em-

peror loved so passionately that, it is said, ... conjugal fidelity was unimpeached while she lived; and when she died, he was on the point of death himself.' No one that reads of the crimes and sorrows that darkened the last years of Shah Jehan's life, but must rejoice that his wife was taken away from the evil to come; and that no taint pollutes the tomb 'which stands in purity, lustre, and beauty, as unrivalled on earth, as the moon in the high heavens.'

Undoubtedly, the Taj is the highest architectural triumph of man. But the Europeans are little inclined to give the credit of its execution to the Indians. They would fain believe, that a Frenchman of the name of Austin de Bordeaux designed and executed the Taj. This Frenchman was no apocryphal being. He was a man of great talent, who held the office of the first *nuksha nuvees*, or plan-drawer, in the court of Shah Jehan, on a salary of one thousand rupees a month, with other occasional presents. He was called by the natives Oostan Eesau, under which name he stands in all the Persian accounts first among the salaried architects. He was sent by the Emperor to settle some affairs of great importance at Goa, and died at Cochin on his way back, leaving a son by a native woman, called Mahomed Shureef, who, too, was afterwards employed as an architect on a monthly salary of five hundred rupees. The Taj is not more ascribed to Austin de Bordeaux than are its mosaics to Genoese and other Italian artists;—what share remains, then, to be attributed to the Indian of the soil on which it stands? It

must be[illegible]e other than that of having gazed at its progress in silent admiration. True, there had abounded, in those days, a great many European adventurers in the court of the Great Mogul. There were Hawkins, a munsubdar, Tavernier, a jeweller, Bernier, a physician —and there may have been an Austin, an architect. True, that in the Roman Catholic burial-ground at Agra, there are old tombstones inscribed with Genoese and other Italian names. But when we see around us so many other magnificent mosques and mausoleums cognate in expression, we should either deny them all, or make no hesitation in acknowledging this. It has been very truly observed by one, that 'the idea stamped upon the building is intensely Mahomedan and Oriental.' The Italians referred to were employed as mere diamond-cutters; and Elphinstone thinks 'it singular, that artists of that nation should receive lessons in taste from the Indians.' Tavernier saw the Taj commenced and finished, and he does not say a word about its execution by Austin. Bernier came to India only five years after the Taj had been completed—and had it been constructed by one of his countrymen, the fact would assuredly have been commemorated in his writings. The noble Tagra characters in which the passages from the Koran are inscribed upon different parts of the Taj had been executed by one Amanut Khan of Schiraz. The name of this man is found inscribed in the same bold characters on the right-hand side as we enter the tomb. It is after the date thus:—A. H. 1048, 'The humble Fakir Amanut Khan of Schiraz.'

In the same manner, Austin de Bordeaux would have been permitted to place his name, had he been the *bonâ fide* architect. But it matters little whether the Taj is of European or of Indian hands—suffice it, that it is a masterpiece of human architecture. The Taj is in architecture what the Venus de Medici is in sculpture, or Shakespeare in poetry.

One feels loath to come away from the Taj, the scene and the sight are so bewitching. The spirit of the lady seems to hover over the spot. Indeed, 'one returns and returns to it with undiminished pleasure; and though at every return one's attention to the smaller parts becomes less and less, the pleasure which he derives from the contemplation of the greater and of the whole collectively, seems to increase; and he leaves it with a feeling of regret that he could not have it all his life within his reach, and of assurance that the image of what he has seen can never be obliterated from his mind *while memory holds her seat*.' There is no traveller who has not been enthusiastic in praise of the Taj. 'It is too pure,' says one, 'too holy to be the work of human hands. Angels must have brought it from heaven, and a glass case should be thrown over it to preserve it from every breath of air.' In the words of Bishop Heber, 'though everything is finished like an ornament for a drawing-room chimney-piece, the general effect produced is rather solemn and impressive than gaudy.' 'I asked my wife,' says Sleeman, 'when she had gone over it, what she thought of the building? "I cannot," said she, "tell you what I think, for I

know not how to criticise such a building, but I can tell you what I feel. I would die to-morrow to have such another over me?"' This is what many a lady has felt, no doubt—and which sums up the highest praise that can be bestowed upon the Taj.

It is strange that history does not take that notice of the Taj which it deserves. But India has not its historian yet. Nor to this day has the Taj had any poet. It missed a very noble one in Childe Harold. Had he 'crossed Earth's central line,' it would then most assuredly have been described in such heart-appealing language as 'filling the air around with beauty'—as 'chaining us to the chariot of triumphant art, to stand as captives, who would not depart'—as 'the poetic marble arrayed with an eternal glory'—and similar other expressions in 'words that breathe, and thoughts that burn,' without which adequate justice cannot be done to the Taj, but which were lavished away upon the Parthenon, the St Sophia, and the St Peter's. Lady-apostrophizing in honour of a lady, is like offering 'sweets to the sweet.'

O thou! whose great imperial mind could raise
This splendid trophy to a woman's praise!
If love or grief inspired the bold design,
No mortal joy or sorrow equall'd thine!
Sleep on secure! this monument shall stand
When Desolation's wing sweeps o'er the land,
By time and death in one wide ruin hurl'd;
The last triumphant wonder of the world.*

Pure as Mumtaza's spotless fame,
The unsullied marble shines;

* By Lady Nugent, the wife of Sir George Nugent, Commander-in-Chief.

Rich as her lord's unrivall'd love
The wreaths that deck their shrines.

On fanes more glorious I have gazed,
Witness St Peter's dome;
And costlier gems shine bright around
The Medician tomb.

But this! Love's temple—beauteous pile,
The pride of Eastern art!
This boasts the present deity,
That seizes on the heart.

All ruling Power! to thee we bend,
Thy potent charm we own—
This structure, simple, graceful, pure,
Oh! this is Love's alone.*

No eastern prince for wealth or wisdom famed,
No mortal hands this beauteous fabric framed,
In death's cold arms the fair Mumtaza slept,
And sighs o'er Jumna's winding waters crept,
Tears such as angels weep, with fragrance fill'd,
Around her grave in pearly drops distill'd.
There fix'd for ever firm, congeal'd they stand,
A fairy fabric, pride of India's land.†

To see the Taj aright, it is said, one 'must see it by the pale moonlight.' Madame Pfeiffer followed this advice, and found 'the polished white marble to fall into vague undefined masses like heaps of snow.' She surmises rightly, 'that the first traveller who visited it by moonlight did so in company that made everything charming.'

The Taj is certainly the proudest of all sepulchral monuments. History records, that in commemoration of a dead wife, who had always yearned for her native mountains, a loving husband, Nebuchadnezzar, erected counterfeit forests and mountains, which nature had de-

* By Mrs C. Fagan, the wife of Col. C. Fagan, Adjutant-General, under Lord Combermere

† Anonymous.

nied to Babylon. The royal sepulchre of Alaric was constructed in the bed of a river diverted from its course, and then restored to its channel. The grave of Jengis Khan was marked by a lofty mound, and then extensive forests were planted round it, to exclude for ever the footsteps of man from approaching his last abode. It is only the Pyramids that can fairly offer themselves to dispute for the award of superiority. But while the sepulchral works adorning the valley of the Nile will be regarded as wonders of art for their solidity of construction and sublimity of conception, the Taj at Agra shall always call forth the admiration of mankind for its being the most exquisite specimen of human architecture, and 'the most gorgeous romance of wedded love.'

The commemoration of departed worth, forms, as it were, a link between the mortal and immortal existence of a human being. Only the fine arts are employed to carry out its intents and purposes. Architecture raises a Pyramid or Taj. Sculpture makes the dull marble start into life. Painting makes a man live upon the canvas. Poetry embalms the dead in epic or elegy. The encouragement that is given to the arts and industry forms the only apology for all costly monuments, marbles, or mummies. In this economic and utilitarian age, a vehement protest would be raised against the outlay of three and a half millions sterling upon an undertaking like the Taj. The ancients were more for ornamental, the moderns are more for reproductive works. The world, like man, has its different phases of

character, in different epochs. It was religious in the time of the Hindoos, martial under the Romans, and shop-keeping in the present century. It is difficult to say what phase it will assume next. In all probability the ultimatum of human society is destined to be the *intellectual.*

The public works of a people embody the form and pressure of their age. The public works of the Hindoos were royal roads, rows of trees, canals and bridges, topes of mango and peepul, tanks and wells, rest-houses for the night, *durmshalas* or inns, hospitals, bathing-ghauts, and temples—all public works for the comforts only of the physical man. The Mahomedans nearly trod in the footsteps of their predecessors. Their reservoirs, aqueducts, canals, gardens, serais, and mosques, exhibit but the same cares for the material well-being of a people, without any progress made by humanity towards the amelioration of its moral condition. Far otherwise are the public works of the English. Their schools and colleges, literary institutes, public libraries, museums, and botanic gardens, are proofs of a greater intellectual state of the world than in any preceding age. It is not suited to the genius or inclination of the Europeans to build churches and temples. The age would not tolerate such a costly sentimentality as the Taj. It would be an anachronism now. The generations of the present day say that 'they are not called upon to do anything for posterity—posterity having done nothing for them?' Supposing the English were to quit India, the beneficence of their rule ought not to be judged of

by the external memorials of stone and masonry left behind them, but by the emancipation of our nation from prejudices and superstitions of a long standing, and by the enlightened state in which they shall leave India. In the words of De Quincey, 'higher by far than the Mogul gift of lime-stone, or travelling stations, or even roads and tanks, were the gifts of security, of peace, of law, and settled order.'

Lounging in the gardens—the whole area is laid out in parterres of flowers and shrubs. The cypresses all round are in harmony with the solemnity of the scene. The orange trees are no less appropriate, to refresh the traveller with the juice of their fruit made into a cooling draught of sherbet. But the rectilinear flower-beds and paved stone walks, strike one as much too artificial. The principal avenue leading from the gateway is nearly a quarter of a mile long. Running along its centre is a row of fountains, eighty-four in number. To see these fountains spout their waters, and diffuse a coolness through the air, is now a luxury that is reserved for great folks. The Taj appears to be kept in proper repair. But a slab is out of its place on the top of the great cupola, and betrays the inside work of masonry. There a wild fig-tree has taken root, to show that even a marble building is not safe from its encroachment. The Taj was completed in 1653. From that time it has withstood the assaults of the elements, and outlived some ten generations. In 1814, the late East India Company expended a lac of rupees on its repairs. But no more, as of yore, are there any Mogul bands to play

music every evening; nor is any eunuch at the head of two thousand sipahis placed as a guard over the building.

There are two mosques on the east and west of the quadrangle facing inwards, and corresponding exactly with each other in size, design, and execution. Their dull blood-red sandstone makes a disagreeable contrast to the snowy white marble of the mausoleum. The mosque on the east, which cannot be used for worship, is said to have been built merely as a *jowab* (answer) to the other.

Took, on departure, the last, long, and lingering view of the Taj. The noble dome, swelling out with its glittering mass in the sun seems to rise as by the enchanter's wand. The stainless snow-white marbled structure seems to image the saintly purity of the lady. The sight 'almost lifts one off the earth.'

Opposite the Taj, on the other side, are seen the unfinished foundations, walls, and arches of a building that had been intended by Shah Jehan for an equally magnificent tomb over himself. It was to have been connected, by a marble bridge over the Jumna, with that of his lady. But the wars between his sons, and his own deposition, put a stop to the completion of the magnificent work; and the austere Aurungzebe was not the man to attend to the fond wishes of a parent at so much waste of the public money.

Just on the same principle that the child picks out the plums before he eats the pudding, has our reader been first treated with the kernel of sight-seeing in Agra. He must now make up his mind to digest a few

of its husk-peelings. The Hindoo antecedents of Agra are little known. No mention of it under any identifiable name exists in Hindoo history or geography. The Great Gun, with its ancient characters, certainly pointed to a remote existence of the city. But the entire silence of Fa Hian and Hwen Thsang is a proof to the contrary of that existence in the centuries those Chinese travellers visited India. In the opinion of the Vishnuvite authorities, Agra is so called from *Agro*, or the first starting-point for a pilgrim on his circuit of *Vrij*—the holy scene of Krishna's adventures. They say it was covered by forests for several hundred years, before Rupa and Sonatun, the followers of Choitunya, landed here to set out upon their exploration of Brindabun. According to Abul Fazil, Agra was a petty village before the time of Secunder Lodi, who first pitched upon this spot for the seat of his government, towards the close of the fifteenth century. But Jehangeer in his autobiographical memoirs states it to have been a city of considerable magnitude, even prior to the advent of the Mussulmans, and that it had been spoken of in terms of admiration by a poet from Ghizni early in the eleventh century. This may have been the state of things under the gallant *Dahimas*, a branch of Rajpoot princes who flourished at Biana about the time alluded to. The statement also appears plausible from the fact of many Hindoo families yet occupying the neighbouring villages from a period of two thousand years' antiquity. But, in that case, it was most likely to have been noticed by the Arabian geographers of the

ninth or tenth centuries. Political considerations for expediting his marches against the Rajpoots, the commercial facilities afforded by the port, and also the desire for founding a new capital, induced Akber, in 1566, to erect Agra into a metropolis to be called after him by the name of Akberabad.

The Agra of the sixteenth century was a walled city of 20 miles circumference, of 100 mosques, 80 serais, 800 public baths, 15 bazars, and a population of 600,000 inhabitants. 'It was,' says Fitch, 'a great and populous city, superior to London, well-built of stone, and having fair and large streets'—when 'Englishmen looked on India in ignorant admiration, and had a dim notion of endless bazars, swarming with buyers and sellers, and blazing with cloths of gold, with variegated silks, and with precious stones; of treasuries where diamonds were piled in heaps and sequins in mountains; of palaces compared with which Whitehall and Hampton Court were hovels; and of armies, ten times as numerous as that which they had seen assembled at Tilbury to repel the Armada.'

'Agra is one of the greatest cities in Hindoostan; and being defended by a citadel of great antiquity, my father had caused such citadel to be thrown down, and a new fabric of hewn stone to be erected on the site, as will be noticed in another place. I shall here only remark, further, that the city is built on both banks of the Jumna, that part which is situated on the hither, or western side, being four coss in breadth and ten coss in circumference, and that on the opposite side being not

more than two coss in breadth, and three coss in circumference. The multiplicity of noble structures erected on all sides, such as mosques of superior magnitude, baths, spacious caravanserais, and splendid private palaces, are found to an extent that would place it on a par with the most celebrated cities in Irak, Chorasan, and the famed territory beyond the Jihon,—the ordinary dwellings of the inhabitants being built, for the greater part, three and four stories high. Such is the immensity of the population, that from the hour of the evening prayer to the close of the first quarter of the night, the throng is so densely wedged, that it is not without the utmost difficulty the people can pass and repass along the streets. As an attempt to ascertain in some degree the extent of this multitudinous population, I directed the *kotwal* or superintendent of the police one day to make a tour through the city, and count the individuals assembled in the different *maarkahs* or theatres for athletæ or pugilists; and his report was, that in none of those places did he find assembled less than two or three thousand persons, although it was not the first of the new year, nor any of those days of public rejoicing, on which it was usual for the people to appear abroad for amusement. From this it is considered that some estimate may be formed of the enormous multitude which thronged in every quarter. Add to this, that every day throughout the year there were conveyed to the place, by boats along the Jumna, not less than three thousand loads for fuel, and yet for dirrems it would be difficult to purchase a single branch, so rapid

was the demand. For nearly eight months, moreover, which is the duration of the dry season, or the interval between the periodical rains, not less that five and six thousand horses for sale daily enter the city from Cabul and the countries in that direction, and such is the rapidity with which they are disposed of, that not one is to be purchased on the succeeding day. In short, I do not know in the whole world in magnitude, and the multitude of its inhabitants there is any city to be compared with the metropolis of Agra.'

Such, in his autobiography, is Jehangeer's description of Agra in its palmiest days. Imperfect as the census and statistics are, they are, nevertheless, acceptable for the light they throw on the ways and manners of that age.

The Agra of the nineteenth century is four miles long, by three broad. The outer wall, formerly environing the city as far as Secundra, is no more. Traces of the inner wall are still seen at places. It matters little about this ancient circumvallation, when 'a wall of men is better than a wall of masonry.' But a population reduced to 80,000 speaks of a serious diminution. No more are there any public baths, so useful in a climate in which men are roasted. No more are there any gymnasia for wrestlers, whose feats afforded pleasure to the nobility and gentry of our land down to the last generation. Their profession has met a serious blow from the passion of our rulers for the amusements of the Turf. Not five horses are now sold here a day in the place of five thousand. The horse-trade of India has

left its old channel from Persia and Cabul. It now flows across the ocean from England, the Cape, and New South Wales. Indeed, Arab mares are, in many instances, still preferred as the finest chargers for purposes of war and pageantry. But the office-jaunts of our brokers and traders are drawn by geldings from Pegu, and the coaches of our aristocracy by *walers* and gigantic quadrupeds from England. The *mundees*, or open squares, for the loading and unloading of goods, still retain many of their names. There is the *Loha-ka-mundee*, where iron and iron goods must have been sold. There is the *Peepur-mundee*, which must have derived that name from its having been the depôt for the sale of pepper. But all these mundees have been taken up, and are now crowded with the houses of the inhabitants. The 'splendid private palaces' of the Omrahs have all disappeared long ago. Not a vestige remains of the aristocratical mansions of Rajah Maun, Rajah Beerbul, the Khani Azim, Chaja Aias, Asoph Khan, or Mohabet Khan. Their very sites have been forgotten, and nobody now remembers the names of those worthies, or knows about the fate of their descendants, either become extinct or plebeianized into the undistinguishable commonalty. Most of the present houses have been built from old bricks dug up. It is only of late that bricks have begun to be made at Agra. The old *bustee* was in the Tajgunge, which has nearly broken up. Here were the houses of the ancient nobility, in whose place have now sprung up families of rich Mahratta bankers, Marwaree merchants, Lallah Mahajuns, and Cashmeree

Pundits, who occupy houses in *Peepur-mundee* or *Loha-ka-mundee*. There were, in those times, factories of the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English at Agra. Now, only three or four wine-shops and millinery shops afford the data of the statistics of its foreign trade. In 1666, the Christian population of Agra consisted of 25,000 families. The duties of the artillery, its arsenals, and foundries, were those by which that population had been principally maintained. Now, though under a Christian government, the Christian population would not amount to one-fourth of that number. Little, that has any architectural value, has been added by the English to the topography of Agra. The *past*—and the *past* alone—is uppermost in Agra.

In the *Chouk*, however, a man still has to go elbowing his way through the crowd, and the noisy buzzing scene of an Indian bazar, well helps to give an idea of the teeming thousands of an Indian town. 'The blazing cloths of gold, variegated silks, and precious stones' are still exposed here for sale. But the shops are no better than one or two-storied cabins, eight feet square. The Native principle of shop-keeping is to avoid show and dazzle—not to attract customers by exposing out the best wares and goods, as they do at the *London House*, or the *Emporium of Fashion*. No doubt, this principle is to be traced to the fears of an extortionate Mahomedan or Mahratta government. But, partly, the fault also lies in the Oriental prejudice of shopping. By the Natives, it is thought a positive disgrace to go and buy the best food or clothing for them from the

market. Our women are much more sensible in this respect, and fail not to show a better knowledge of economy and bargaining, when out-of-doors to a *mela*, or upon a pilgrimage. This shopping-spirit of the Hindoo women appears to be a common feature in the character of the Aryan sisterhood. Female taste must exercise its influence before Native shop-keeping can have the refined attractions of the shops that adorn the sides of Tank Square. The streets in the Agra Chowk are stone-paved, and gently slope away from an upheaved centre to the level of the city. Fifteen generations have transacted here the daily business of their lives, and yet the pavement is in as good a state of preservation as when Queen Elizabeth sent Sir John Mildenhall on an embassy to the Great Mogul—or when William Hawkins was a munsubdar here of 400 horse, with an income of £3000, and also an Armenian wife into the bargain. The nicest things to buy in the Agra bazar are models of the Taj, in ivory or stone-clay—the traveller carrying away the building to live in his recollections.

The *ekkas* remind us of how Fitch 'was struck by seeing the grandees conveyed in little carts, carved and gilded, covered with silk or very fine cloth, and drawn by two little bulls of the size of dogs.' The bullocks spoken of refer to the dwarfish oxen of Guzerat, which country had been conquered by Akber just ten years before the visit of that English traveller. Better coaches did not exist then in the metropolis of the Great Mogul. 'One of Sir Thomas Roe's presents from

James the First to Jehangeer (probably suggested by Fitch's account) was an English coach. But within a short period after the present had been made, the ambassador was struck to see that several others had been constructed, very superior in materials, and fully equal in workmanship.' But this emulation died away without producing a permanent improvement in the coach-building of the country. Up to this day, the *ekkas* continue to run in the streets of Agra. Riding is in general fashion through all Hindoostan, as driving is now the rage in Calcutta. No decent public conveyances are available for strangers at Agra.

Though properly a Mahomedan city, the population here is more Hindoo than Mussulman. 'It is a singular fact,' says a writer, 'illustrating the forbearance of the Moguls, and the stability of the Hindoo village communities, that around Agra, though the seat of a Moslem government, hardly any instance occurs of a Mussulman claiming hereditary property in the soil, while many Hindoos can show that their ancestors occupied the villages for twenty centuries.' The Mussulman population is gradually wearing out in all the cities of Hindoostan. There is no longer the tide of Tartar or Persian emigration to seek fortune in India, and recruit the numbers of their nation. Like most men of broken-down fortunes, the Indian Mahomedan is now wrapt in the contemplation of his past antecedents. But he looks back with a sterile regret on the ages which can never return to him again. He has been lamed for all his days to come, and no more

can he be up and doing. Alien he has always been, and he is now moreover a nonentity. The Hindoo community at Agra is formed of all classes of the nation—Mahrattas, Marwarees, Doabees, Cashmarees, and Bengalees. The Marwaree abounds in the largest number. Confined for ages to a sandy tract, and cut off from intercourse with the rest of his nation, the mildness and moderation of the English government have tempted him out from the retreats in which he struggled for food, and was kept behind in wealth and civilization. In perseverance, in shrewdness, in self-denial, in most of the qualities which conduce to success in life, the Marwaree has seldom been surpassed. He is now often engaged in speculations, by which he is distinguished as the most commercial of all the Indians. Agra is the nearest outlet to his abode, by which he can conveniently pour himself into Hindoostan. Physical causes influencing his condition, have given to the Marwaree almost a different ethnological variety. His barren soil and the scarcity of his food are stamped upon his spare form, his fleshless muscles, and his sharp-contracted features. The poverty of his country is also bespoken by the scanty clothing upon his body. He is the only Indian who is politically a Hindoo, and who still wears the dhooty, and scarf, and ear-rings of his ancestors.

The present commercial quarter of Agra is on the right of the bridge of boats as you enter the town. Of trade, deserving the name, there is little in Agra. The arts are also in a state of decay from the activity in

which they had been seen by Sir Thomas Roe. Carpet-making is observed in many of the shops. The produce of these far-away districts can never compete with the produce grown near the ports of shipment. The ancient wealth of the city is still helping the inhabitants, as are also the emoluments of the various offices under the present régime. But the position of Agra makes it the most eligible outlet and inlet for the traffic of Rajpootana; and when the Rail shall have removed the disabilities under which its trade labours, and goods shall come up from the sea in twice the time that the earth travels round its axis, the place will rapidly advance in wealth and prosperity.

Of course this month of October is not exactly the time to enable a man to judge of those great summer heats which led Shah Jehan to remove the capital from Agra to Delhi. The furnace-blasts of the *loo* are felt in the midsummer months. But greater than the heat is the execrableness of the water at Agra. It is almost undrinkable, next to sea-water. Coming on the way, we found on this side of Cawnpore the water of all the wells more and more brackish, till at last it had reached the nauseating point at Agra. This is on account of the nitre in the soil. The Jumna water tastes sweet enough. But the up-country wallahs are all prejudiced against stream-water. The Hindoostanee *Durwans* in Calcutta invariably prefer the well-water to the holy Gunga water. Perhaps, in a past scientific age, the Hindoo philosophers had made an analysis similar to that of the modern chemists, who pronounce the saline

contamination to be harmless. But whether it be from the dictum of science or experience, the people of Hindoostan have a notable nicety of discrimination of good from bad water. The first question in the mouth of a travelling Hindoostanee is '*Hawa panee kesa hye*'—how are the air and water? But the wells which yield brackish water are considered to be much more valuable for irrigation than those which yield sweet water. Ice is collected here in the cold weather, and can nowhere be so great a luxury as in a place where the heat often gives the ophthalmia and apoplexy.

Oil-rubbing, as with the Bengalees, is also not in fashion among the Hindoostanees. Probably, they do not want the stimulative ointment which is a necessary protective against the damp of Bengal. But the Bengalees living here testify to its soothing effect in a climate where the dry hot air tells with a caustic influence on the skin. Nor have the up-country wallahs any inoculation, much less vaccination, among them—though they are not without the *Sitlee* in the category of their goddesses. Nothing is more common to see in the North-West than handsome faces fearfully pock-marked. To have a pitted face matters little to a man—though to a Mussulman, with his shaggy beard, it fails not to give the truculence of a villain. But to exhibit an unconcern about its effects in the case of the other sex is a positive and unpardonable cruelty towards the famed Hindoostanee women and fair Rajputnees, who are thus most unfairly subjected to mourn themselves as underrated in the market of beauty, and to rue looking

at themselves in a mirror, just as anybody is disgusted at the horrible porosity of his frame seen through a microscope.

The cantonments are two, and the civil station is six miles from the river. The Agra College, built in a Gothic style, stands in a fine quadrangle. Once on a time, Tom Corryat studied the Persian and Oordoo at Agra, and the Jesuits addressed the Great Mogul in his own language. Now, the Agra wallahs are eager to learn the language of Tom Corryat's countrymen. Akber encouraged schools, at which Hindoo as well as Mahomedan learning was taught, and 'every one was educated according to his circumstances and particular views in life.' But there is no comparison between the qualities of instruction then and at present imparted, and no distinction is now made between the boy of a farmer and the boy of a zemindar, on the common ground of an educational institution.

These also are not the days when a man is first whipped and next made to kiss the rod,—or sent to be sold in China, for breaking a China porcelain. No woman is now buried alive for kissing an eunuch,—nor any man ordered to be trampled upon by elephants in the streets, for refusing to give up his beautiful wife to the Lieutenant-Governor. No molten lead is now poured down a man's throat for speaking treason, and no man's property is now appropriated by a royal caprice,—or released from confiscation by a well-timed jest. Far from all such, the humblest individual now freely speaks out his opinion. Judicial awards are given upon

principles which the Viceroy cannot have altered in all his life—much less at his whim. Prisoners are fed and initiated in trades to cease from their brigandage, and the sick and ailing are treated in public hospitals. The Agra College, the Dewanny and Fouzdarry Adauluts, the Thomason Hospital, the Railroad, and the Electric Telegraph, are the memorials of British rule in the city of the Taj.

In the Agra burial-ground are many curious old tombs. They are, many of them, over Italian and other European adventurers, who swarmed here in the seventeenth century. One of the tombs is dated as far back as the year 1616. The tomb of Colonel Hessing is on the model of the Taj. He was a Dutchman in Scindia's service, who rose from a common soldier to be the Governor of Agra.

Three or four churches now raise up their heads in Agra. But there was more Christianity here when Akber had a leaning to adore the images of the Saviour and the Virgin,—when Jehangeer had figures of Christ and Mary at the head of his rosary,—and when Dara Shekoh sat with Stanislaus Malpica and Pedro Juzarti to study the religious system of the western world. The *Jummah Musjeed* of Agra may still be described in those very words which Heber used forty years ago —'it is picturesque from its neglected state, and the grass and peepul trees which grow about its lofty domes.' This mosque was *built by the Princess Jehanara.*

On the square where four ways meet, the sign-post shows the direction of the high-road towards Gwalior.

In a south-easterly direction from the town was pointed out to us the battle-field from which the handful of British soldiers had to retreat before the rebel Sepoys from Neemuch. Not one European dared to show himself then out of the Fort. The 5th of July, 1857, was the great day of alarm in Agra. The Mahomedan population were very hearty with the rebels. Few of the Hindoos had joined their cause—the rich bankers and others having everything to lose, and nothing to gain. The Bengalees, as usual, had fast bolted up their doors. But the Mahomedan element at Agra is very needy, and without any influence. There are no rich *Mirzas* or *Meer Sahibs* to head a movement. Nowhere in India do the Mahomedans seem to be largely engaged in any trade or speculation. They generally prefer to be office-holders, hoping to rise by service, to which their nation has been bred up. There is no Hindoo or Mussulman in Agra who is as rich as any of our Calcutta millionnaires.

The statistics of the Income Tax are expected to give us an idea of the comparative wealth of our Indian towns. Nothing could have been more welcome after the long day's tour and sight-seeing, than to sit down to the excellent supper got up by our host—a pleasant sequel to sum up one of the most pleasant days of our life. The supper was in a style to tempt a Catholic to break through his Lent. The conversation turned upon the principal subject of the day—*Income Tax*. Throughout Hindoostan it is regarded as a national mulct for the Rebellion. The mysterious 'wants of the

State' are incomprehensible to the popular understanding. As yet, the Indians have not a common national mind to feel a concern for the welfare of a common State. They are busy about their own private fiscal prosperity, and indifferent to any outside calls of common interest. It never enters into their thoughts to inquire about the annual income or expenditure of the State,—or to care about its 'chronic deficits.' The eloquent English of our Finance minister has told upon a limited number, but has scarcely enlightened the mass of the population, beyond producing this conviction, that their pockets are to be touched not by any force of arms but by the force of arguments. Familiar only with the land-tax and customs, our nation needs the political education to be prepared for the innovations of a higher political science. Never before was the national debt known in India, where only the whim of a despot had to be pledged for its payment. Not more is the national debt foreign to the ideas of the North-Westerns than is the Income Tax. The Native mind must be taught to appreciate the wants of the State—to feel an interest in its well-being, before it will endorse the opinion that 'taxation is no tyranny.'

Our after-supper talk was kept up to a late hour. To the doctor it was left to play the heroic in our tale —to pledge our Hindoostanee friends in full bumpers, and retire to bed on the *sea legs of Jack ashore.* The tradesman had gulped down, in a pellmell *pillau*, curry, fruits, grapes, cream, and comfits, and he found it un-

comfortable to keep straight his spinal bone. The lawyer and ourself wound up the epilogue of the day with a delicious draught of iced sherbet, and then went to sleep for the first night in the city of Agra.

Digitized with financial assistance from



on 07 January, 2017